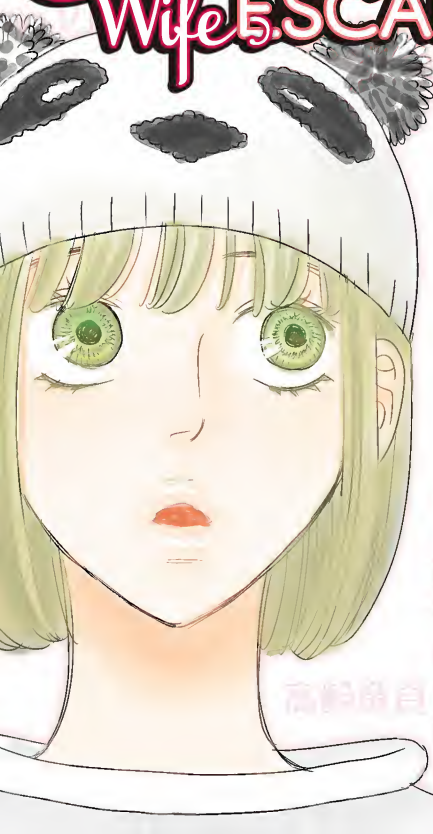


THE FULL-TIME Wife ESCAPIST



契約結婚

高橋未智

就職難

事実婚

高橋未智

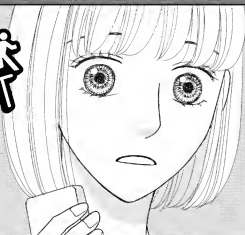
1

Tsunami
Umino

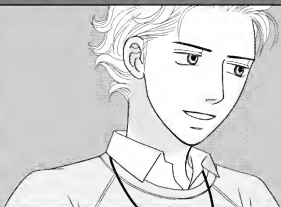
Kodansha
Comics
Kiss



THE FULL-TIME
Wife ESCAPIST



VOLUME
1



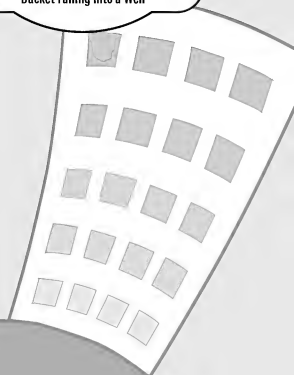
Tsunami Umino

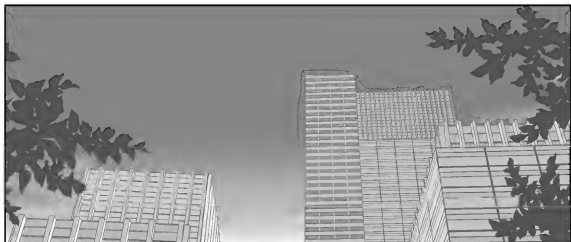


THE FULL-TIME WIFE ESCAPIST

1

The Autumn Sun Sets as Fast as a
Bucket Falling into a Well





GOD.

IT FEELS BAD TO KNOW...

*...THAT NO ONE NEEDS
YOU.*



Today's Guest
Mikuri Moriyama-san

TODAY'S GUEST IS MIKURI MORIYAMA-SAN. WHEN SHE GRADUATED COLLEGE, SHE WAS UNABLE TO FIND A JOB, SO SHE WENT TO GRAD SCHOOL. HOWEVER, WHEN SHE FOUND HERSELF STILL WITHOUT WORK AFTER GRADUATING THE SECOND TIME, SHE SIGNED UP WITH A TEMP AGENCY. RECENTLY, THAT AGENCY DROPPED HER, AND NOW, SHE'S LOOKING FOR WORK YET AGAIN.

YOU SAID
YOU STUDIED
PSYCHOLOGY IN
COLLEGE,
RIGHT?

YES.
SO I—

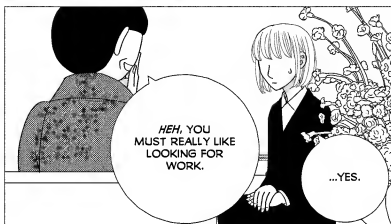
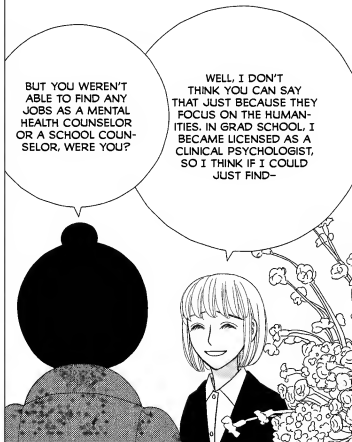
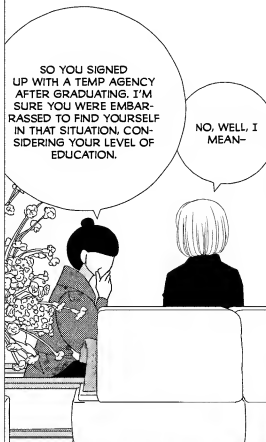
SO YOU
THOUGHT YOU
COULD FIND
WORK IN HR
OR PLANNING
AND PRODUCT
DEVELOP-
MENT...

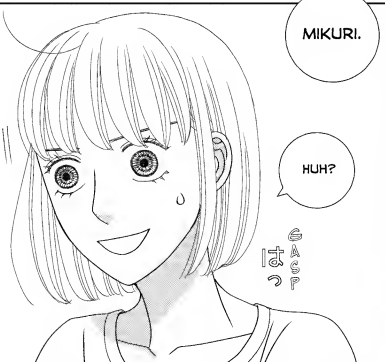
EXACTLY.
LOOKING BACK, I
GUESS I COULD
HAVE TRIED TO
WIDEN—

...BUT YOU, HEH.
EXCUSE ME. BUT
YOU FAILED
COMPLETELY,
RIGHT?

AND SO, YOU
THOUGHT IT WOULD
BE BETTER TO GO
TO GRAD SCHOOL
THAN SIT AROUND
UNEMPLOYED. I
NOTE, THOUGH, THAT
YOU WENT TO A
HUMANITIES-ORIENTED
SCHOOL. WOULDN'T
CHOOSING SUCH A
SCHOOL JUST MAKE
YOUR JOB SEARCH
HARDER?

Mikuri Moriyama
Hasn't been able to find a job in years





MIKURI.

HUH?

はっ
っ
っ

OKAY, CUT
TO COMMERCIAL.

WHAT?!



I'M NOT
CRITICIZ-
ING.

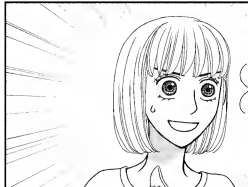
IN FACT, A
GUY I USED TO
WORK WITH HAS
SAID HE HAS A
JOB FOR YOU.



IS IT THAT
HARD TO FIND
A JOB?

YOU
HAVEN'T BEEN
DOING MUCH
LATELY.

NOW,
DEAR.



WHAT DO
YOU SAY?

HUH?!

OH, I GET IT. I'VE
THOUGHT ABOUT SIGN-
ING UP FOR ONE OF
THOSE SERVICES
MYSELF.

YEAH. APPARENTLY,
THEY MOSTLY DO
CLEANING FOR
SINGLE MEN AND
WORKING WOMEN,
STUFF LIKE THAT.
THERE'S NOT
NECESSARILY A TON
OF WORK, BUT
IT'S BETTER THAN
NOTHING.

IT'S AN
ACTUAL CLEANING
COMPANY, RIGHT? NOT
JUST ONE OF THOSE
TEMP AGENCIES FOR
MAIDS?

YEAH, IT MUST BE
TOUGH TO KEEP
THE HOUSE TIDY BY
YOURSELF WHILE
YOU'RE WORKING
SO MUCH.

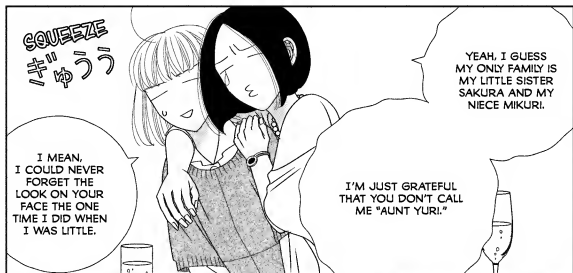
A HOUSE
CLEANING
SERVICE,
HUH?

YOU'RE NOT ALONE,
YURI-CHAN! REMEMBER
HOW YOU CHANGED MY
DIAPERS FOR ME WHEN I
WAS A BABY?

WAH!
THIRTY LONELY YEARS!
I HAVEN'T MARRIED
OR HAD CHILDREN
OR-

I WAS
TWENTY-TWO
WHEN I STARTED
LIVING ALONE,
SO I GUESS IT'S
BEEN THIRTY
YEARS NOW.

SOB
うう



SQUEEZE
きゅっ

I MEAN,
I COULD NEVER
FORGET THE
LOOK ON YOUR
FACE THE ONE
TIME I DID WHEN
I WAS LITTLE.

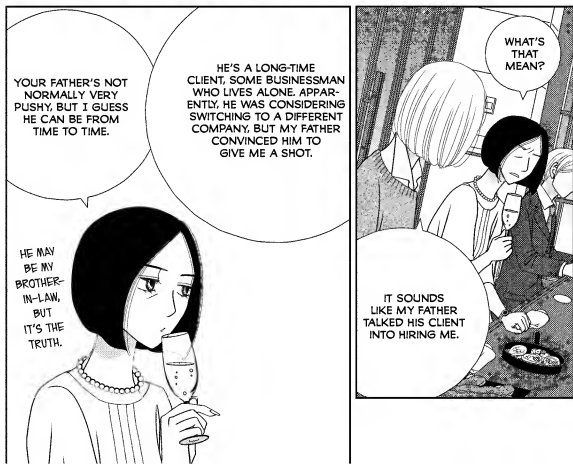
I'M JUST GRATEFUL
THAT YOU DON'T CALL
ME "AUNT YURI."

YEAH, I GUESS
MY ONLY FAMILY IS
MY LITTLE SISTER
SAKURA AND MY
NIECE MIKURI.



NO, I'M BEING
CONTRACTED
ON A
"PERSONAL
BASIS."

ANYWAY,
IS THIS JOB GOING
TO OFFER YOU A
FOOT IN THE DOOR
AT THIS CLEANING
COMPANY?



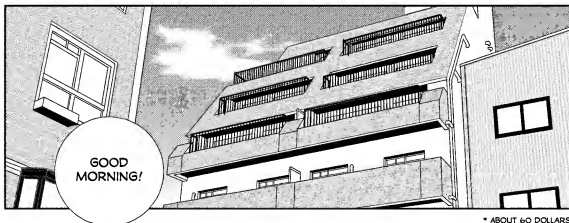
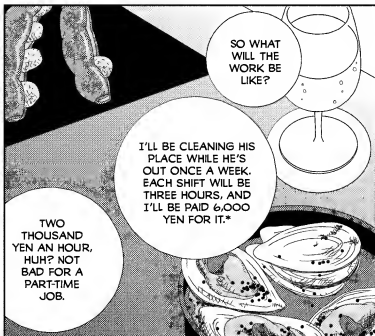
WHAT'S
THAT
MEAN?

YOUR FATHER'S NOT
NORMALLY VERY
PUSHY, BUT I GUESS
HE CAN BE FROM
TIME TO TIME.

HE'S A LONG-TIME
CLIENT, SOME BUSINESSMAN
WHO LIVES ALONE. APPAR-
ENTLY, HE WAS CONSIDERING
SWITCHING TO A DIFFERENT
COMPANY, BUT MY FATHER
CONVINCED HIM TO
GIVE ME A SHOT.

HE MAY
BE MY
BROTHER-
IN-LAW,
BUT
IT'S THE
TRUTH.

IT SOUNDS
LIKE MY FATHER
TALKED HIS CLIENT
INTO HIRING ME.



* ABOUT 60 DOLLARS.



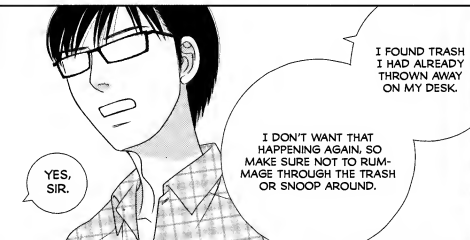
HELLO.



LIKEWISE.
I'M TSUZAKI.

YES, I'M
MIKURI MORI-
YAMA. PLEASSED TO
MEET YOU.

YOU MUST
BE MR.
MORIYAMA'S
DAUGHTER.



YES,
SIR.

I DON'T WANT THAT
HAPPENING AGAIN. SO
MAKE SURE NOT TO RUM-
MAGE THROUGH THE TRASH
OR SNOOP AROUND.

I FOUND TRASH
I HAD ALREADY
THROWN AWAY
ON MY DESK.



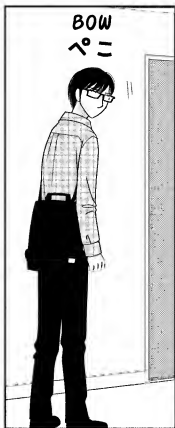
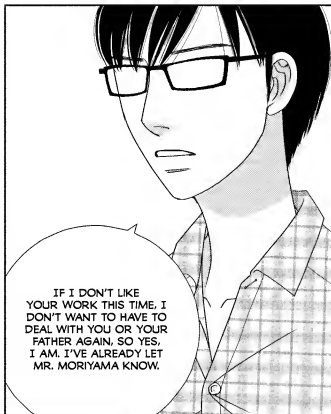
HAVE YOU
HEARD WHAT
HAPPENED
WITH THE FIRST
WOMAN I HIRED
FROM YOUR
COMPANY?

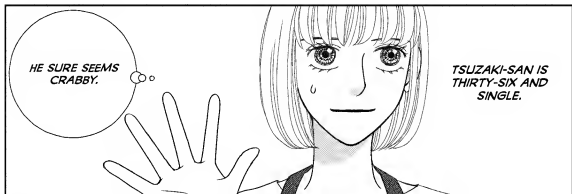


YES,
SIR.

THE ONE WHO
CAME AFTER HER
WAS REALLY SLOPPY,
AND SHE'D ALWAYS
FORGET TO SWEEP
THE CORNERS.
PLEASE MAKE SURE
TO BE THOROUGH.

YES, SHE
WAS LOOKING
THROUGH YOUR
TRASH OR SOME-
THING.





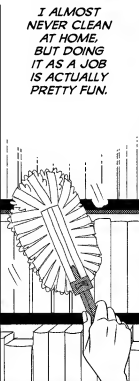
HE SURE SEEMS
CRABBY.

TSUZAKI-SAN IS
THIRTY-SIX AND
SINGLE.



IT'S JUST
NICE TO
MAKE
THINGS
ALL
CLEAN.

WELL, GETTING
PAID CERTAINLY
HELPS, TOO.

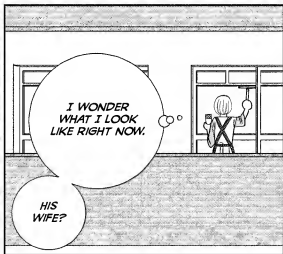
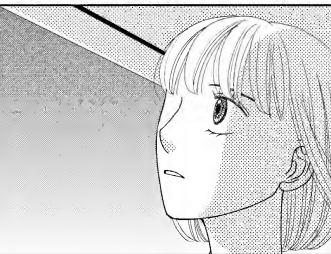


I ALMOST
NEVER CLEAN
AT HOME,
BUT DOING
IT AS A JOB
IS ACTUALLY
PRETTY FUN.



...THAT JUST
MAKES IT MORE
OF AN ACCOM-
PLISHMENT IF
HE'S SATISFIED
WITH MY WORK.

BUT
Y'KNOW...



I WONDER
WHAT I LOOK
LIKE RIGHT NOW.

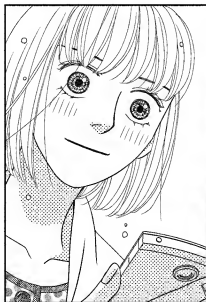
HIS
WIFE?

THEN AGAIN, I
CAN HUM AS I
WORK NOW...

IF I GOT MARRIED,
THAT WOULD BE
LIKE AN ETERNAL
JOB. MAYBE I
COULD ESCAPE
FROM THIS SPIRAL
OF UNEMPLOYMENT.

...BUT MARRIAGE
MIGHT TAKE ALL THE
FUN OUT OF IT.

BESIDES, IT'S
NOT LIKE I'VE HAD
A BOYFRIEND IN
YEARS.



From: Tsuzaki-san

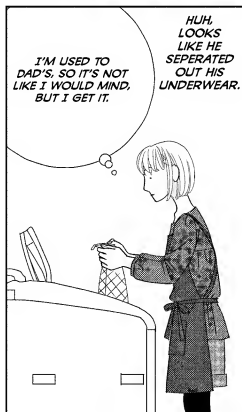
Date: 09/26 9:03 P.M.

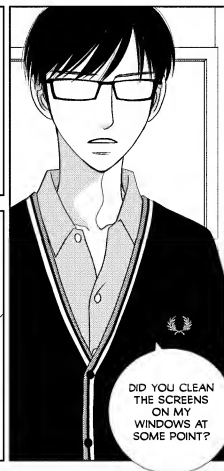
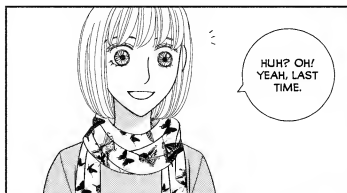
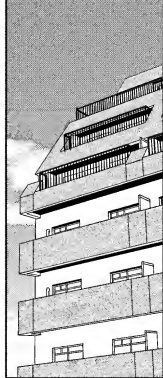
Subject: Next Week

I'll be seeing you.

Tsuzaki







IN SEPTEMBER...

...IN A CERTAIN
ONE-BEDROOM
APARTMENT...



...MIKURI RECEIVED
HER FIRST WORDS
OF GRATITUDE
FROM A CLIENT.



AFTER FINISHING
GRAD SCHOOL,
SHE BEGAN
WORKING FOR A
TEMP AGENCY.
NOW SHE'S BEEN
LAID OFF, AND IS
LOOKING FOR
MORE WORK.

MEET MIKURI MORI-
YAMA. SHE'S
TWENTY-FIVE
YEARS OLD.



THIS WAS
THE FIRST
TIME WE SAW
HER SMILE IN
RELIEF.



IT'S EASIER TO KNOW
HOW I'M DOING IF
THE CLIENT DOESN'T
BABY ME.

REALLY, IT'S EASIER TO
WORK FOR A HARD-
TO-PLEASE GUY LIKE
TSUZAKI-SAN.



...SO WHY HAS SHE
BEEN STRUGGLING WITH
UNEMPLOYMENT FOR
ALL THESE YEARS?

SHE SEEMS TO
ENJOY HER
WORK...

I WAS
PROBABLY A
LITTLE TOO PICKY
ABOUT WHAT
KIND OF JOB I
WOULD TAKE.



WITH THAT...

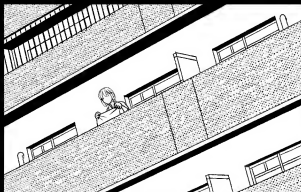
...SHE
STOPPED
TALKING.

WHEN I SIGNED
UP WITH THE
TEMP AGENCY,
I WAS FINALLY
ABLE TO GET
SOME WORK,

BUT THEN THE
COMPANY LAID OFF
MY WHOLE DEPART-
MENT.



AS USUAL, WE
FIND HER ON THE
BALCONY.



BY NOVEMBER, IT
HAD BEEN TWO
MONTHS SINCE SHE
STARTED HER
JOB DOING
HOUSEWORK.



I FEEL LIKE HE'S
REALLY STARTING
TO TRUST ME.

THE OTHER DAY,
HE AGREED TO
START HAVING MY
PAY AUTOMAT-
ICALLY WITH-
DRAWN FROM HIS
ACCOUNT.

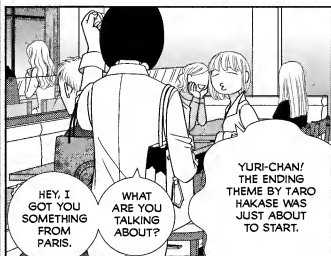
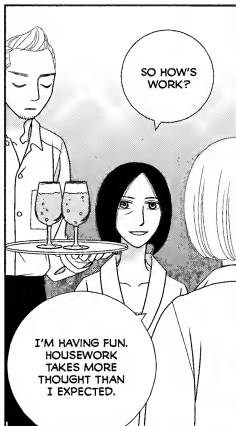
"MORIYAMA-SAN,
WHAT DOES
'WORK' MEAN TO
YOU?"

FINALLY,
WE TRIED
ASKING HER...



I GUESS
WORK
MEANS...

HMM. GOOD
QUESTION.



THIS MAN IS A FAMOUS JAPANESE COMPOSER AND VIOLINIST.





IT NEVER
CAME FOR
ME!



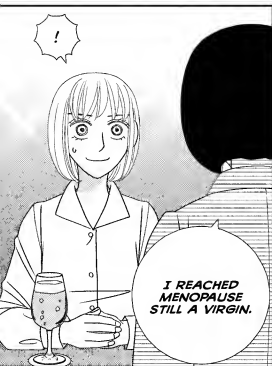
NO WAY, I
CAN DO THAT
LATER. RIGHT
NOW, I WANT
TO WORK.

HOW ABOUT IF
YOU JUST FOUND
YOURSELF A
BOYFRIEND TO
MARRY AND
BECAME A
HOUSEWIFE?



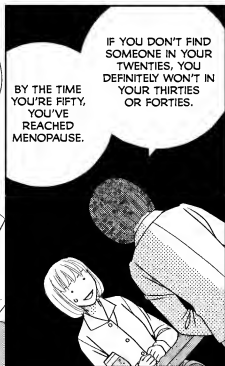
YOU MAY THINK YOU
CAN GET MARRIED
LATER, BUT I SHOULD
WARN YOU THAT LATER
NEVER COMES.

YU-
YURI-CHAN?



LET ME SCARE
YOU A LITTLE.

I REACHED
MENOPAUSE
STILL A VIRGIN.



IF YOU DON'T FIND
SOMEONE IN YOUR
TWENTIES, YOU
DEFINITELY WON'T IN
YOUR THIRTIES
OR FORTIES.

BY THE TIME
YOU'RE FIFTY,
YOU'VE
REACHED
MENOPAUSE.

OF COURSE I
WORK HARD!
AT THIS POINT,
WHAT WOULD I
LIVE FOR IF NOT
WORK?

ACK!

DON'T GET
THE WRONG
IDEA. BOYS
LIKE ME,
AND I'VE
DATED
BEFORE...

BUT YURI, YOU'RE
STILL YOUNG AND
PRETTY, AND YOU
WORK SO HARD
AT YOUR JOB.

...BUT I KEPT
THINKING I'D
GET MARRIED
"SOMEDAY,"
UNTIL I FOUND
MYSELF SINGLE
AT FIFTY-TWO...

STILL, I CAN'T HELP BUT
THINK IT WOULD'VE BEEN
BETTER TO HAVE MARRIED
AND GOTTEN A DIVORCE
THAN NEVER TO HAVE
MARRIED AT ALL. IT MIGHT
BE EASIER SOCIALLY AND
EMOTIONALLY.

YEAH, YOUR LIFE
SEEMS VERY FUL-
FILLING TO ME,
YURI-CHAN.

I'M
LIVING EACH
DAY TO ITS
FULLEST.

REALLY,
MY LOT ISN'T
SO BAD.



...IT HURTS TO
THINK NO ONE HAS
EVER SEEN ME AS
SPECIAL.

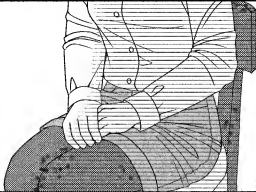


AWW.

AS IT IS,
EVERYONE
WANTS TO TELL ME
WHAT THEY THINK
I DID WRONG.



AND...



OUR PROBLEMS ARE
BASICALLY THE SAME.

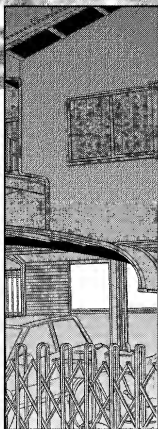
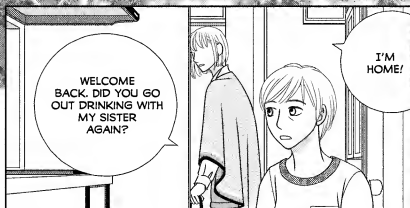


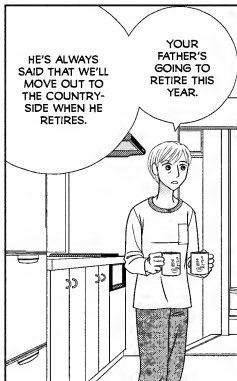
YURI-CHAN WISHES SHE COULD
FIND A HUSBAND...



...AND I WISH I COULD
FIND WORK.

I GUESS
EVERYONE
WANTS TO
FEEL NEEDED.





HE'S ALWAYS SAID THAT WE'LL MOVE OUT TO THE COUNTRY-SIDE WHEN HE RETIRES.

YOUR FATHER'S GOING TO RETIRE THIS YEAR.



WHEN WE MOVE?

IT'LL BE A SHAME THAT YOU WON'T SEE EACH OTHER AS OFTEN WHEN WE MOVE.



WELL, HE COULDN'T FIND A LOG HOUSE, BUT HE SAID HE'S FOUND A REFURBISHED TRADITIONAL JAPANESE HOUSE THAT HE LIKES.

THESE ARE GOOD.

I THOUGHT HE WAS JUST DAYDREAMING.

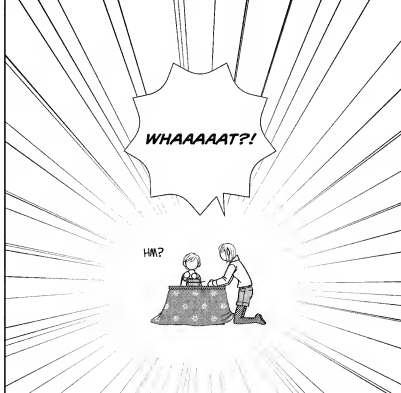
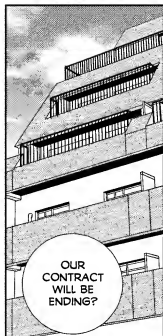
WHAT? LIKE THAT LOG HOUSE HE ALWAYS WENT ON ABOUT? FOR REAL?

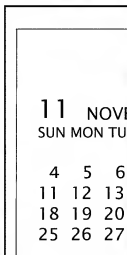
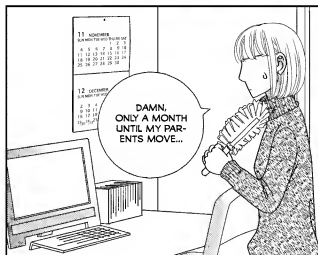
IN THE ORIGINAL, SHE USES THE TERM KOMINKA. KOMINKA REFERS TO VARIOUS KINDS OF HOUSES BUILT IN JAPAN PRIOR TO THE TAISHO ERA, WHICH BEGAN IN 1926. THESE HOUSES WERE TYPICALLY BUILT WITH TRADITIONAL JAPANESE ARCHITECTURE, WHICH USES FEW OR NO NAILS.

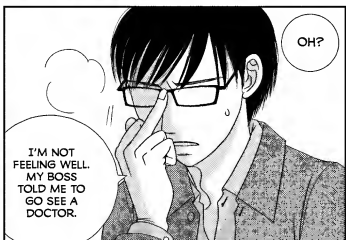
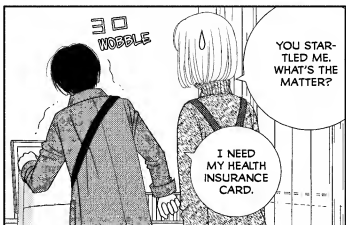
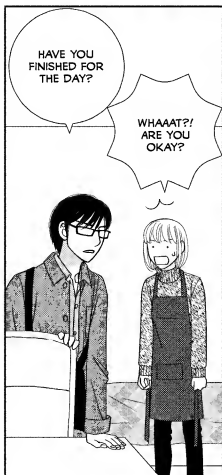
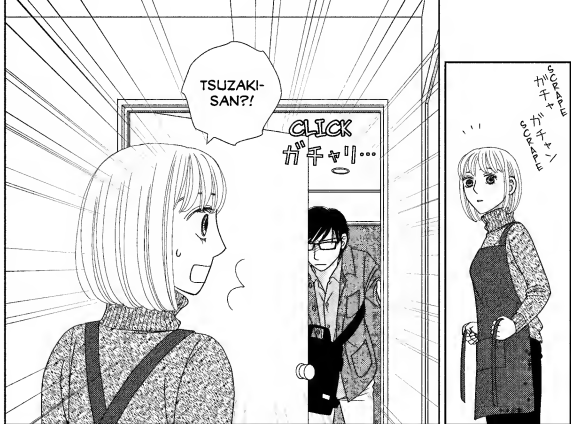


IT'S REALLY LOVELY

WHAT DO YOU THINK? DO YOU WANT TO COME WITH US?







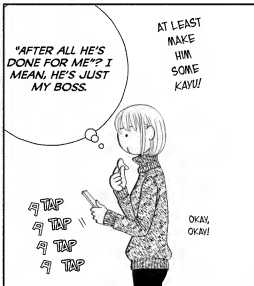
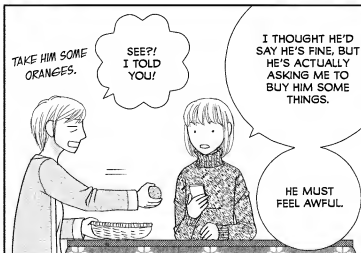


From: Tsuzaki-san

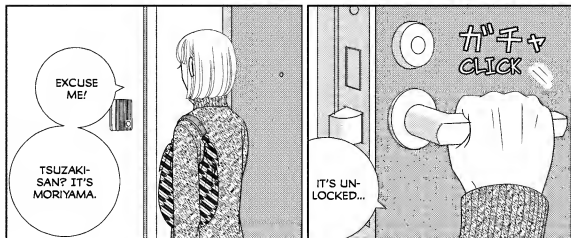
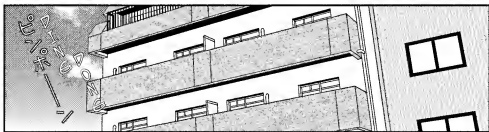
Date: 11/28 1:13 P.M.

Subject: Re: Are you okay?

Would you bring me a thermometer and some ice cream? Bring the receipt, too, please.

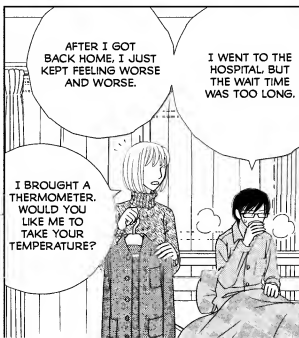


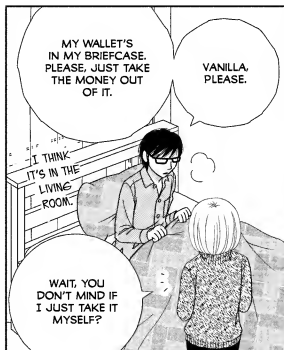
THIS IS A PORRIDGE MADE BY COOKING RICE IN A LARGER AMOUNT OF WATER THAN USUAL. IN ENGLISH IT IS SOMETIMES CALLED CONGEE.





* ABOUT 102 DEGREES FAHRENHEIT.





カチカチ

NOW, WHERE
ARE THOSE
PAJAMAS?

SQUEEZE

ぎゅっ

EEP!
HOT!

I CAN'T JUST
OPEN HIS
UNDERWEAR
DRAWER
WITHOUT PER-
MISSION.

MAYBE HE
DOESN'T
NEED A
CHANGE OF
UNDERWEAR.

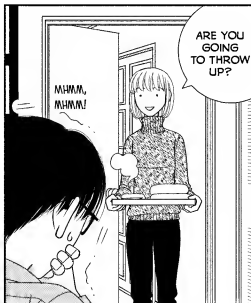
ALL RIGHT,
I'M COMING IN.

ANYWAY,
IF YOU'RE WILLING TO
COMPENSATE ME FOR
ALL THAT, PLEASE LET ME
KNOW IF THERE'S ANY-
THING MORE I CAN DO
FOR YOU.

LET'S START BY
WIPING YOUR
BODY DOWN
AND CHANG-
ING YOUR
CLOTHES.

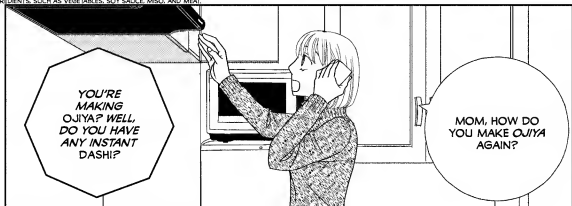
I'LL GO
GET
SOME
HOT
TOWELS.

?





THIS DISH IS SIMILAR TO KAYU, BUT IT TYPICALLY INCLUDES A GREATER VARIETY OF INGREDIENTS, SUCH AS VEGETABLES, SOY SALUCE, MISO, AND MEAT.



THIS IS A FISH STOCK USED OFTEN IN JAPANESE COOKING.



WAS THAT
MEDIUM
BOXERS?

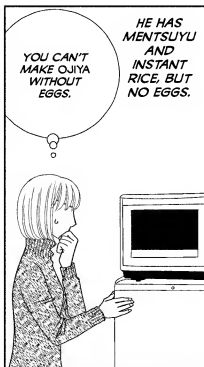
WHISPER

...

YES.



I'M GOING
TO PICK UP SOME
EGGS AND LEEKS.
WOULD YOU LIKE ME
TO BUY YOU SOME
NEW UNDERWEAR
WHILE I'M
AT IT?



YOU CAN'T
MAKE OJIYA
WITHOUT
EGGS.

HE HAS
MENTSUYU
AND
INSTANT
RICE, BUT
NO EGGS.

MENTSUYU IS A JAPANESE SAUCE MADE OUT OF DASHI, SOY SAUCE, MIRIN (A RICE-BASED COOKING ALCOHOL), AND SUGAR. IT CAN BE USED AS AN INGREDIENT IN VARIOUS DISHES AS WELL AS FOR DIPPING.



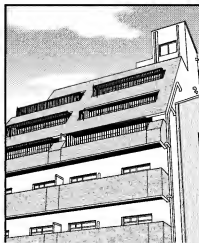
I'M GOING TO
DO THE LAUNDRY
BEFORE I GO, SO I
MIGHT BE GETTING
HOME A LITTLE LATE.

HI, MOM. I'M GETTING
HUNGRY, SO I'M GOING
TO EAT HERE ONCE THE
OJIYA'S READY. I'LL COME
HOME AFTER THAT. AS FOR
DINNER, DON'T WORRY
ABOUT ME.



I HOPE
THESE WILL
DO.

* ABOUT \$4.80.





HAVE YOU
CHANGED?
I'LL WASH
THE CLOTHES
YOU WERE
WEARING.



NO WAY! I
THINK THEY
LOOK GOOD.

WHAT'S THIS
PRINT ON
THEM?

THEY'RE
A LITTLE
GAUDY.



I'VE GOT TO
TAKE CARE OF
THAT LAUNDRY
ONCE THIS IS
DONE.



ADD A
LITTLE SOY
SAUCE IF IT'S
TOO BLAND.

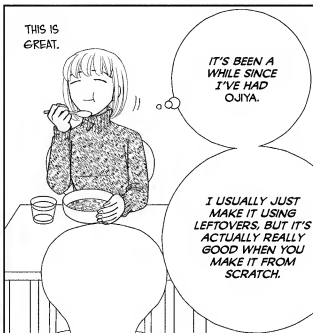


THIS IS
GOOD.



EXCUSE
ME.

I'M JUST
LEAVING YOU
SOME WATER
RIGHT HERE.



THIS IS
GREAT.

IT'S BEEN A
WHILE SINCE
I'VE HAD
OJIIYA.

I USUALLY JUST
MAKE IT USING
LEFTOVERS, BUT IT'S
ACTUALLY REALLY
GOOD WHEN YOU
MAKE IT FROM
SCRATCH.



HE EVEN LET
ME WASH HIS
UNDERWEAR. HE'S
ALWAYS BEEN SO
SELF-CONSCIOUS
ABOUT THAT.

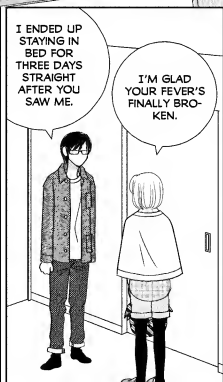
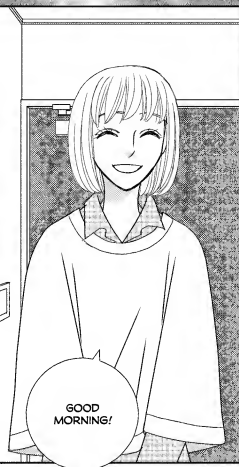
HE NORMALLY
PLAYS IT SO
COOL. IT JUST
MAKES IT THAT
MUCH MORE FUN
TO MOTHER HIM!

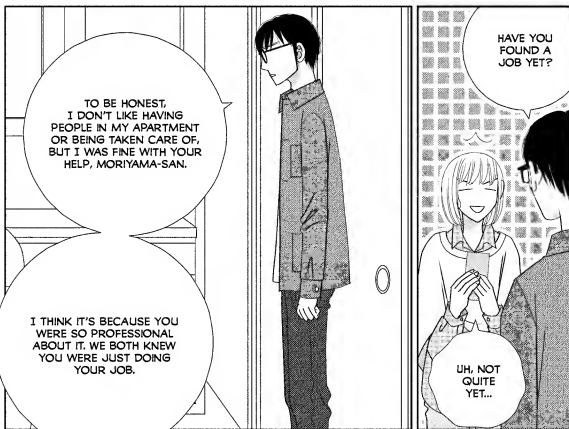
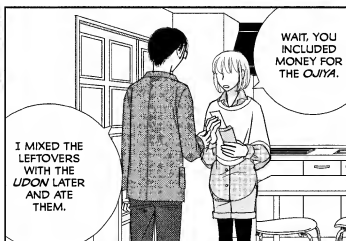
THIS IS
GREAT!

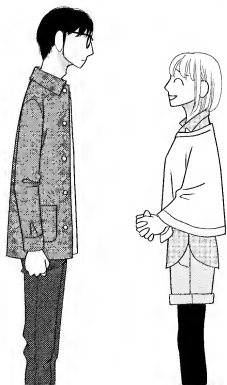
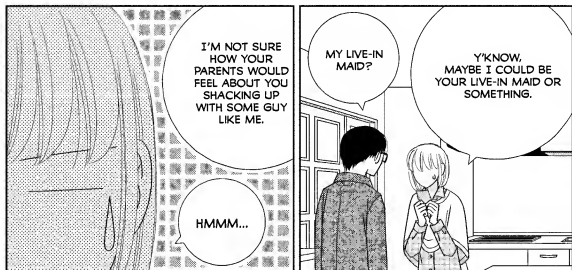
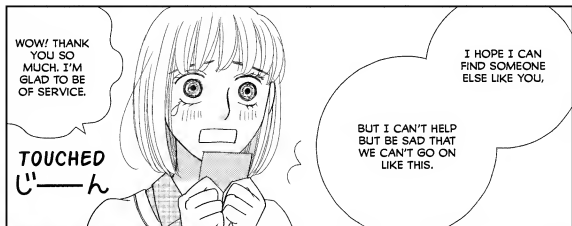
IT MAKES
ME FEEL SORT
OF POWERFUL
TO THINK THAT
HE'D BE HELP-
LESS WITHOUT
ME.

OHHH!

AS CLOSE AS WE'VE
GOTTEN, THOUGH,
I GUESS I WON'T
BE WORKING FOR
HIM FOR MUCH
LONGER.





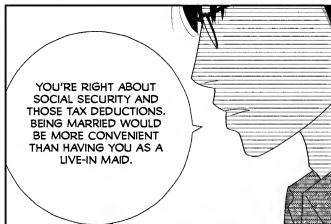
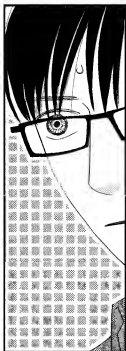




I MEAN, IN A PURELY PROFESSIONAL WAY!
BEING MARRIED
WOULD BE A LOT
MORE CONVENIENT.

...WHAT?

WE'D GET A
TAX BREAK
AND SOCIAL
SECURITY,
AFTER ALL.



YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT
SOCIAL SECURITY AND
THOSE TAX DEDUCTIONS.
BEING MARRIED WOULD
BE MORE CONVENIENT
THAN HAVING YOU AS A
LIVE-IN MAID.



NO NEED FOR
A WEDDING OR
ANYTHING! WE'D
ONLY BE MARRIED
ON PAPER.



HUH?



I KNOW!
RIGHT? THAT'S
WHAT I MEAN!

BUT ARE YOU
REALLY OKAY
WITH THAT?

...I'M
SORRY.

...BUT IT IS TRUE
THAT THERE ARE
PEOPLE WHO
WORRY ABOUT
THAT KIND OF
THING.

NO,
YOU'RE
FINE.



WHEN YOU MEET
SOMEONE WHO YOU
REALLY LIKE AND WANT
TO MARRY, YOU'LL HAVE
A BLACK MARK ON YOUR
RECORD. ARE YOU OKAY
WITH THAT?

THAT SEEMS
PRETTY PREJUDICED
AGAINST DIVORCED
PEOPLE, IF YOU
ASK ME...



OOPS! I
GUESS I JUST
SPAT OUT MY
DEEPEST FEAR.

あはははは
HAHAHAHAHA

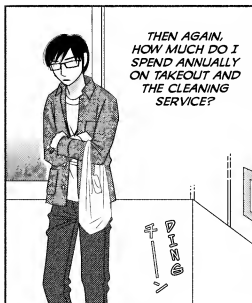
HAHAHA, I
GUESS I HAVE
NO CHOICE, SINCE
NO ONE NEEDS ME.

WELL, SINCE I
CAN'T FIND A JOB,
I GUESS I'LL JUST
HAVE TO LIVE IN THE
COUNTRY WITH MY
PARENTS!

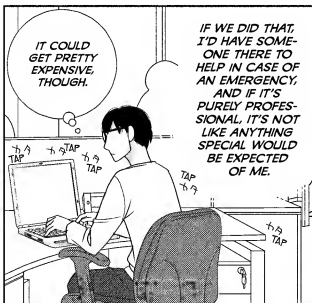
I WANT TO
CRY!

HAHAHAHAHA!
THIS SUCKS!

MARRIAGE, HUH?



THEN AGAIN,
HOW MUCH DO I
SPEND ANNUALLY
ON TAKEOUT AND
THE CLEANING
SERVICE?

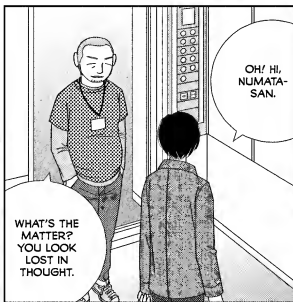


IT COULD
GET PRETTY
EXPENSIVE,
THOUGH.

IF WE DID THAT,
I'D HAVE SOME-
ONE THERE TO
HELP IN CASE OF
AN EMERGENCY,
AND IF IT'S
PURELY PROFES-
SIONAL, IT'S NOT
LIKE ANYTHING
SPECIAL WOULD
BE EXPECTED
OF ME.



Y'KNOW...



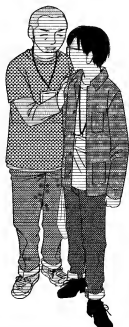
WHAT'S THE
MATTER?
YOU LOOK
LOST IN
THOUGHT.

OH! HI,
NUMATA-
SAN.



HEY,
TSUZAKI-
KUN.

...LET'S JUST SAY
I'VE HAD SOME
TROUBLE FINDING
THE *RIGHT* KIND OF
PERSON.



...I'VE BEEN
WONDERING
WHY YOU
AREN'T
MARRIED YET,
TSUZAKI-KUN.

HUH?

AREN'T YOU
A BACHELOR
YOURSELF,
NUMATA-SAN?

WELL...

WHAT THE HELL?
WHAT THE HELL?
WHAT THE HELL?!

HE'S HITTING
ON ME JUST
BECAUSE I'M A
BACHELOR!

WHOA!

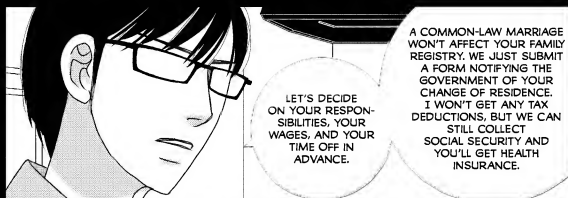
たっ
PASH

PING

OH YEAH,
I'VE
BEEN
THERE.



In the next episode...



THIS IS THE MAIN SYSTEM BY WHICH RECORDS ARE KEPT ON JAPANESE CITIZENS. IN TERMS OF ITS IMPORTANCE AND USE IN EVERYDAY LIFE, ONE CAN THINK OF IT AS BEING akin TO A COMBINATION OF A BIRTH CERTIFICATE AND A SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER.

Mikuri gets a job as Tsuzaki's wife.



YOU'RE
GETTING
MARRIED,
MIKURI?



**Tsuzaki
and Mikuri
begin their
life as a
"couple."**

IT SHOULD BE ALL RIGHT
FOR EITHER OF US TO
DATE OTHER PEOPLE,
BUT LET'S TRY TO KEEP
THAT ON THE DOWN
LOW FOR THE SAKE OF
APPEARANCES AND
EACH OTHER.



WHAT ABOUT
THAT OTHER
STUFF MARRIED
PEOPLE DO?

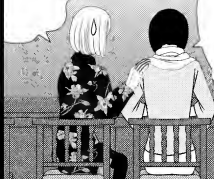
WE'LL SLEEP
IN SEPARATE
ROOMS, OF
COURSE.

THERE'S NO
QUESTION
ABOUT IT.

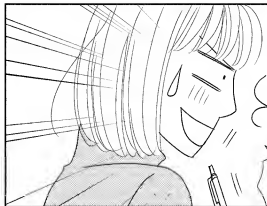


**Tune in to find out
what happens next to
Mikuri in
"A Fox's Wedding"!**

YURI-
CHAN!



I'M HAPPY FOR YOU,
BUT TO BE COMPLETELY
HONEST, I ALSO FEEL LIKE I'M
BEING ABANDONED YET AGAIN.
I'M ABOUT READY TO GIVE
UP ON THIS WORLD...



は
あ
っ
す

OH!
YES!



HAVE YOU
FILLED IT OUT
YET?

THE FULL-TIME
WIFE ESCAPIST

2

A Fox's Wedding





WE GOT MARRIED (SORT OF).

*OF COURSE, WE'RE
ACTUALLY BOSS AND
EMPLOYEE, NOT
HUSBAND AND WIFE.*

*WE'RE NOT EVEN CHANGING
OUR FAMILY REGISTRIES.
IT'S JUST A COMMON-LAW
MARRIAGE.*

COME ON, YOU
TWO. THIS IS YOUR
FIRST TIME GETTING
MARRIED. WHY NOT
HAVE A WEDDING?

*MY BOSS IS
DOING MOST
OF THE TALKING
TODAY.*

LIKE I SAID
BEFORE, WE'VE
TALKED THIS OVER.
WE BOTH THOUGHT
IT WOULD BE BEST
TO KEEP THINGS
SIMPLE AND JUST
HAVE A NICE FAMIL-
LY DINNER.

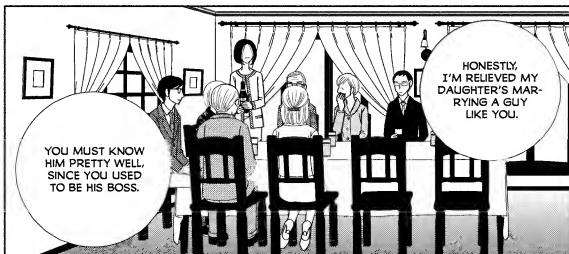
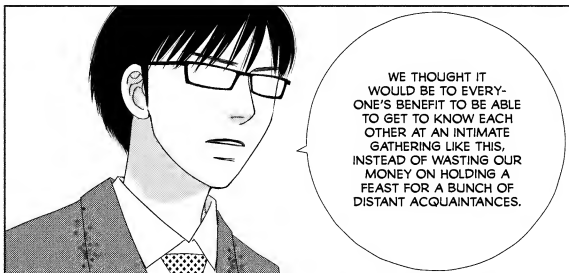
YURI-CHAN,
YOU SHOULD
USE HIS NAME.
HE'S YOUR
NEPHEW,
AFTER ALL.

I DON'T LIKE
YOUR BROTHER
MUCH.

NOW,
CHIGAYA!

NOW,
NOW.

THE WEDDING IS
FOR THE FAMILY'S
SAKE, NOT THE
COUPLE'S.



WAIT...

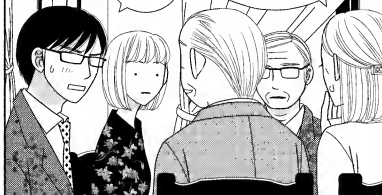
DOES THAT
MEAN HE'S STILL
A VIRGIN?



HE ALWAYS GOT
GOOD GRADES,
BUT HE NEVER
WAS MUCH OF A
ROMANTIC.

I'M SORRY, MIKURI-CHAN.
HIRAMASA'S NEVER SPENT
MUCH TIME WITH GIRLS.
SO I DON'T THINK HE UN-
DERSTANDS US VERY WELL.
DON'T HESITATE TO TELL
HIM WHAT'S WHAT.

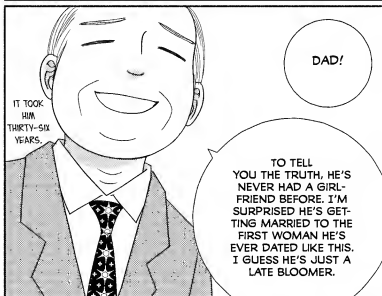
MOM!



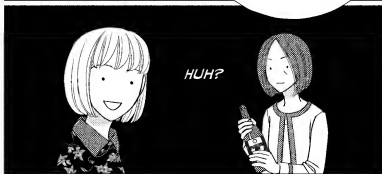
DAD!

IT TOOK
HIM
THIRTY-SIX
YEARS.

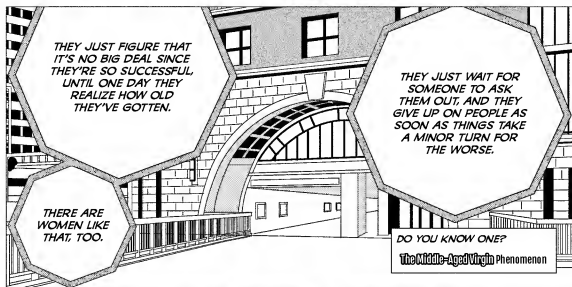
TO TELL
YOU THE TRUTH, HE'S
NEVER HAD A GIRL-
FRIEND BEFORE. I'M
SURPRISED HE'S GET-
TING MARRIED TO THE
FIRST WOMAN HE'S
EVER DATED LIKE THIS.
I GUESS HE'S JUST A
LATE BLOOMER.

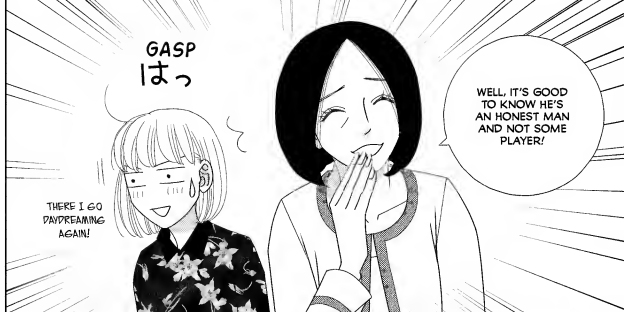


HUH?









GASP
はっ

WELL, IT'S GOOD
TO KNOW HE'S
AN HONEST MAN
AND NOT SOME
PLAYER!

THERE I GO
DAYDREAMING
AGAIN!



TOO BAD YOU
DIDN'T PLAY AROUND
A LITTLE LESS YOUR-
SELF, AUNT YURI.
THEN MAYBE YOU'D
BE MARRIED
BY NOW.

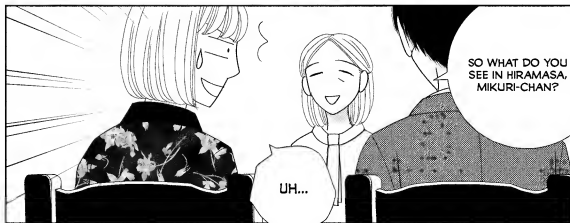
YURI-
CHAN...



MEN WHO
DON'T PLAY
AROUND ARE
THE BEST,
AFTER ALL!

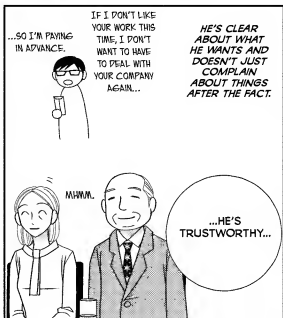
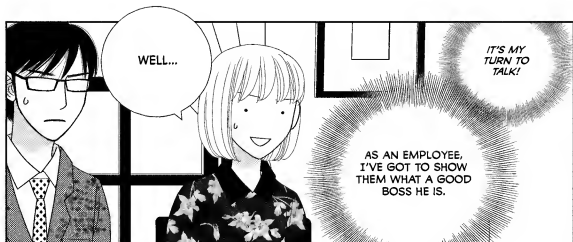
YEAH, THAT WAY
WE DON'T HAVE
TO WORRY ABOUT
HIM CHEATING OR
ANYTHING.

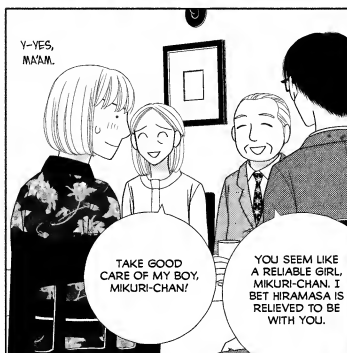
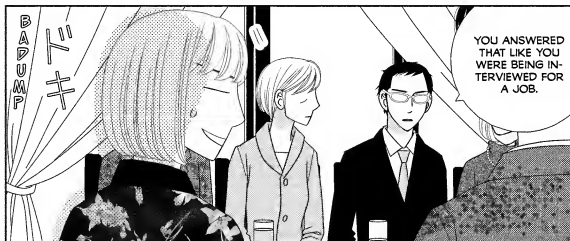
EXACTLY.



SO WHAT DO YOU
SEE IN HIRAMASA,
MIKURI-CHAN?

UH...



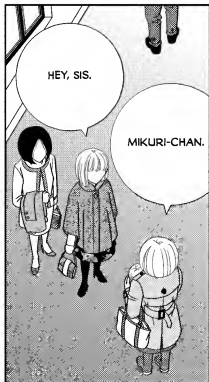


MARRIAGE REALLY
STARTS ONCE
YOU'RE LIVING
TOGETHER.



HEY, SIS.

MIKURI-CHAN.



YOU REALLY DON'T
LIKE HIM, DO YOU,
YURI-CHAN?

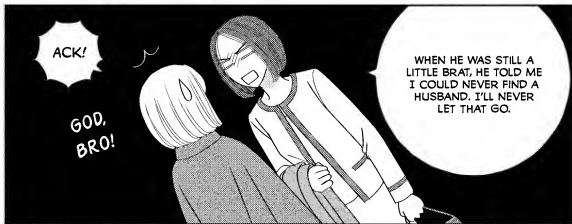
HEARING IT
FROM YOUR
BROTHER'S WIFE
HAS IMPACT.

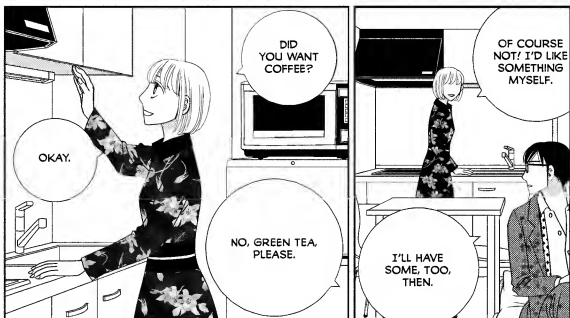


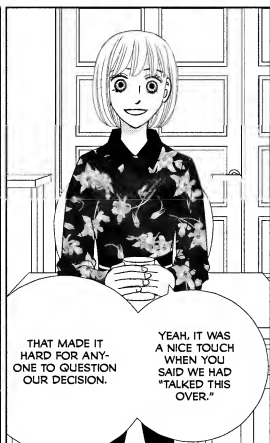
ACK!

GOD,
BRO!

WHEN HE WAS STILL A
LITTLE BRAT, HE TOLD ME
I COULD NEVER FIND A
HUSBAND. I'LL NEVER
LET THAT GO.





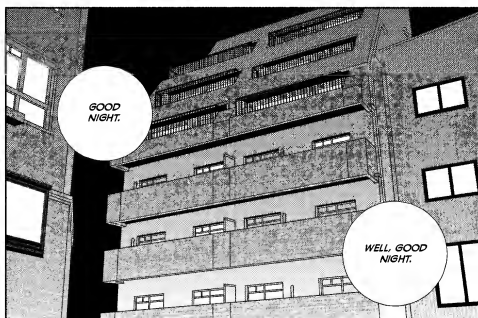




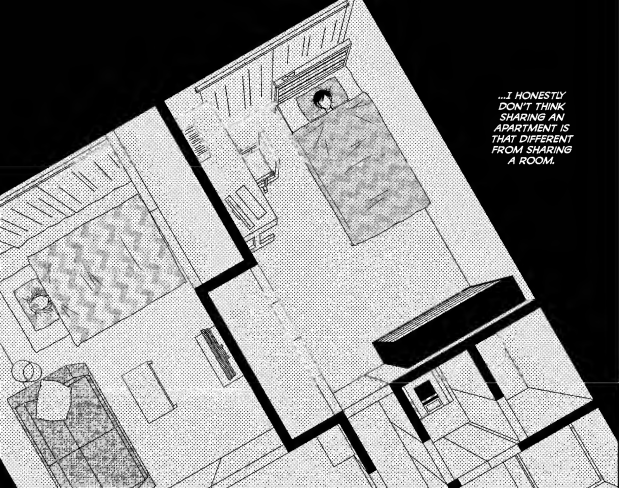


* ABOUT 500 US DOLLARS.





I MEAN...



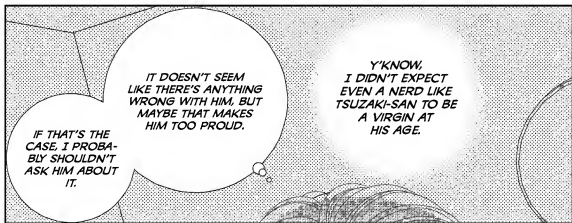
...I HONESTLY
DON'T THINK
SHARING AN
APARTMENT IS
THAT DIFFERENT
FROM SHARING
A ROOM.



ANYWAY, I
STILL DON'T
FEEL AS AT
EASE AS I DID
AT MY PAR-
ENTS' HOUSE.

IT'S SCARY
WHAT YOU
CAN GET
USED TO.

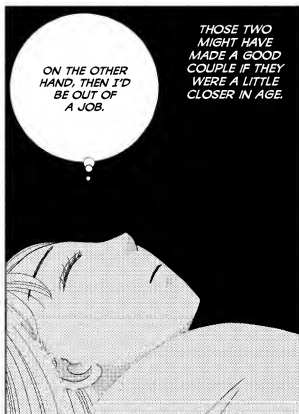
IN THE END, I
WAS ONLY NER-
VOUS ABOUT IT
FOR THE FIRST
WEEK.



IF THAT'S THE
CASE, I PROBA-
BLY SHOULDN'T
ASK HIM ABOUT
IT.

IT DOESN'T SEEM
LIKE THERE'S ANYTHING
WRONG WITH HIM, BUT
MAYBE THAT MAKES
HIM TOO PROUD.

Y'KNOW,
I DIDN'T EXPECT
EVEN A NERD LIKE
TSUZAKI-SAN TO BE
A VIRGIN AT
HIS AGE.



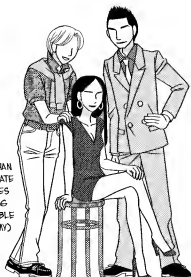
ON THE OTHER
HAND, THEN I'D
BE OUT OF
A JOB.

THOSE TWO
MIGHT HAVE
MADE A GOOD
COUPLE IF THEY
WERE A LITTLE
CLOSER IN AGE.

SHE WAS BEAUTI-
FUL AND POPULAR,
BUT SHE STILL
ENDED UP A
MIDDLE-AGED
VIRGIN.

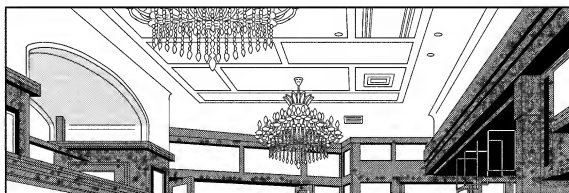
I GUESS HE'S
THE SAME AS
YURI-CHAN, IN
A WAY.

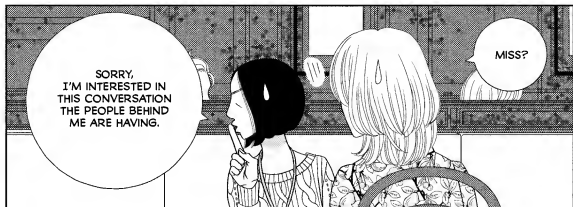
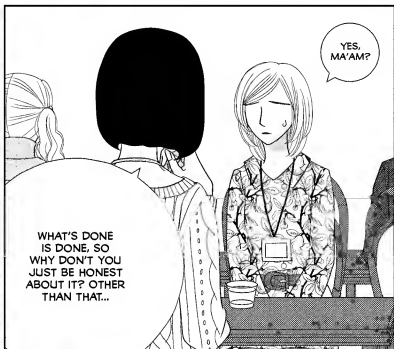
YURI-CHAN
IN HER LATE
TWENTIES
(DURING
THE BUBBLE
ECONOMY)



WE MUST STRIVE
AS A NATION
TO... MUMBLE,
MUMBLE...

UNEMPLOYMENT,
PEOPLE GETTING
MARRIED LATER,
HAVING FEWER
CHILDREN...







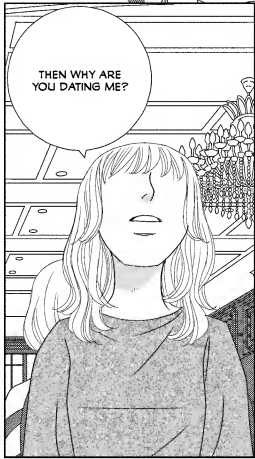
I JUST DON'T
SEE THE POINT IN
GETTING MARRIED
AT ALL.



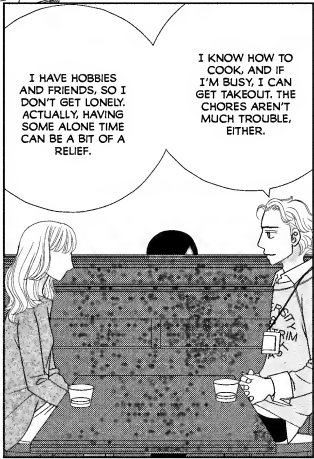
ARE YOU SAYING
YOU DON'T WANT
TO MARRY ME,
KAZAMI-SAN?



IT'S
NOT THAT I
DON'T WANT
TO MARRY
YOU.

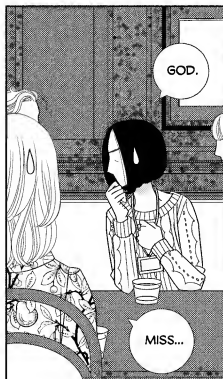
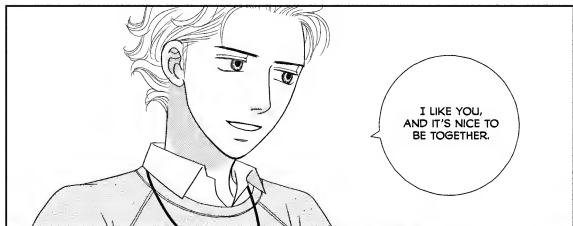


THEN WHY ARE
YOU DATING ME?



I HAVE HOBBIES
AND FRIENDS, SO I
DON'T GET LONELY.
ACTUALLY, HAVING
SOME ALONE TIME
CAN BE A BIT OF A
RELIEF.

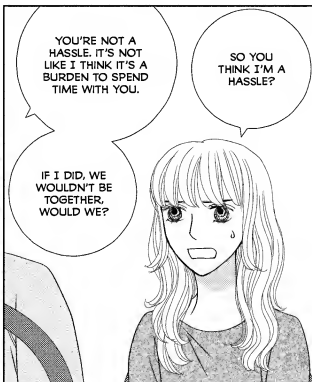
I KNOW HOW TO
COOK, AND IF
I'M BUSY, I CAN
GET TAKEOUT. THE
CHORES AREN'T
MUCH TROUBLE,
EITHER.





HUH?

THEN WHAT'S
WRONG WITH
BEING TOGETHER
FOREVER?



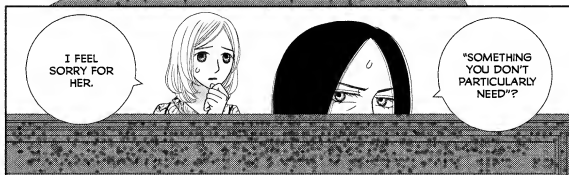
YOU'RE NOT A
HASSLE. IT'S NOT
LIKE I THINK IT'S A
BURDEN TO SPEND
TIME WITH YOU.

SO YOU
THINK I'M A
HASSLE?

IF I DID, WE
WOULDN'T BE
TOGETHER,
WOULD WE?



I MEAN, WOULD
YOU BUY SOME-
THING YOU DIDN'T
PARTICULARLY
NEED?



I FEEL
SORRY FOR
HER.

"SOMETHING
YOU DON'T
PARTICULARLY
NEED"?

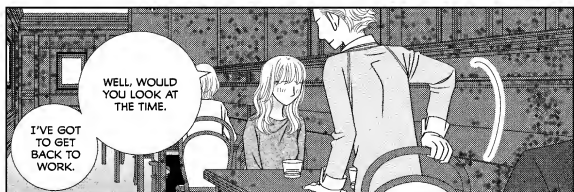


...BUT I
COULD SAY
THE SAME TO
YOU.



YOU DON'T THINK
ABOUT ANYONE
BUT YOURSELF,
KAZAMI-SAN.

MAYBE
SO...

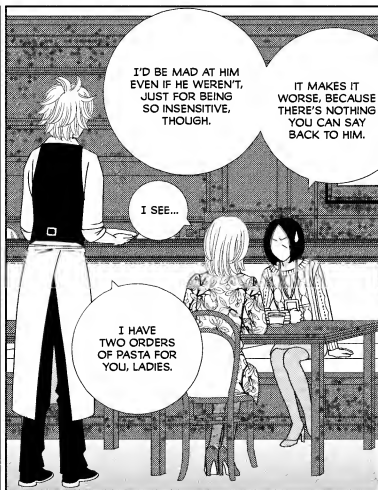
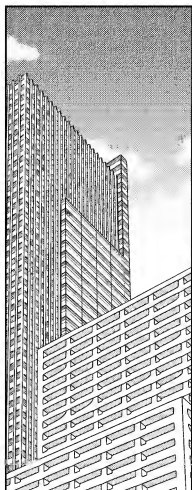
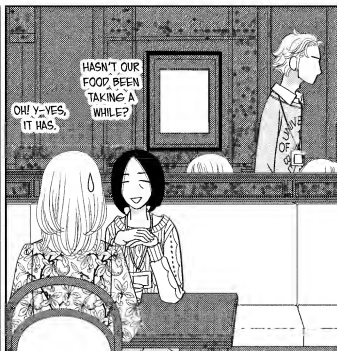
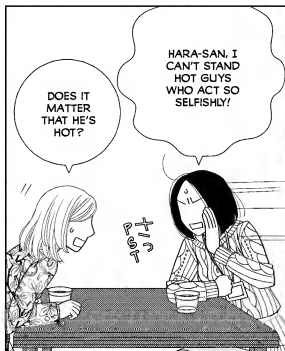


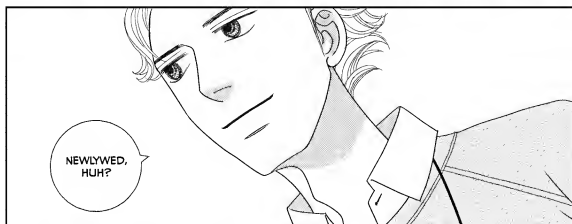
I'VE GOT
TO GET
BACK TO
WORK.

WELL, WOULD
YOU LOOK AT
THE TIME.

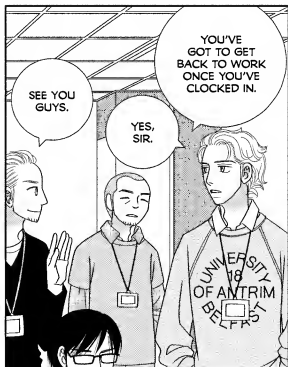


SEE YA.



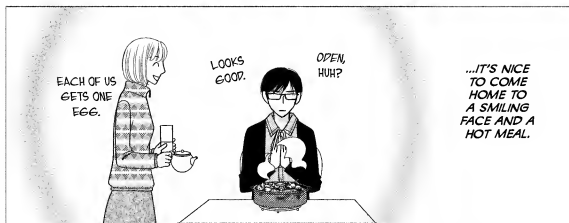




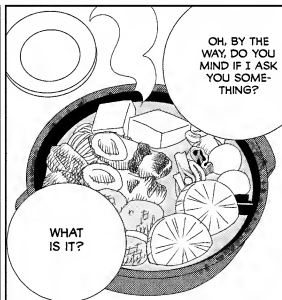
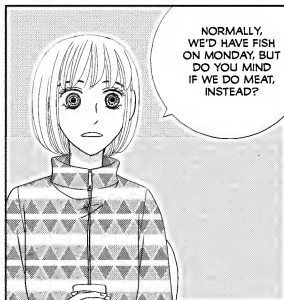




ON THE
OTHER
HAND...

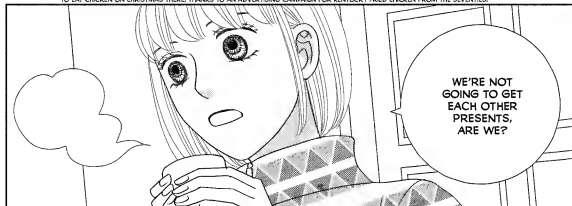


ODEN IS A DASH-BASED STEW THAT CAN INCLUDE INGREDIENTS SUCH AS FISH, POTATOES, RADISH, AND HARD-BOILED EGGS.





WHEREAS CHRISTMAS IS TYPICALLY THOUGHT OF AS A FAMILY HOLIDAY IN AMERICA AND EUROPE, IT IS MORE OF A COUPLE'S HOLIDAY IN JAPAN. IT IS COMMON TO EAT CHICKEN ON CHRISTMAS THERE, THANKS TO AN ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN FOR KENTUCKY FRIED CHICKEN FROM THE SEVENTIES.





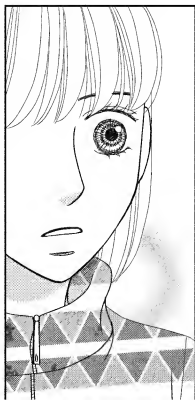
I SEE.

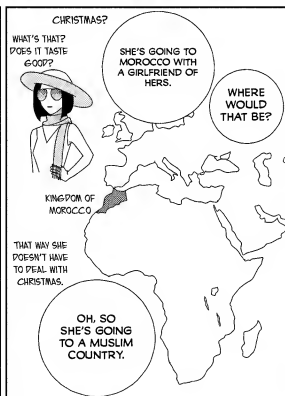
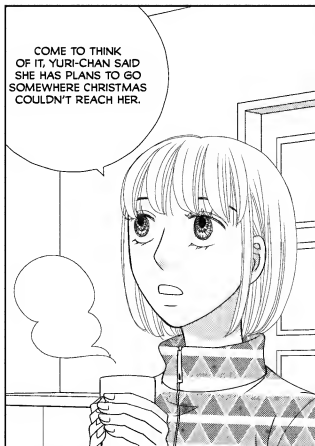


IF IT'S NECESSARY,
WE CAN DECIDE
ON A BUDGET AND
GET EACH OTHER
SOMETHING.

NO, I'D
RATHER JUST
BUY MYSELF
SOMETHING.

Y'KNOW, I DON'T SEE
ANY GOOD REASON
FOR US TO MAKE
OURSELVES FEEL
LONELY THIS
YEAR.



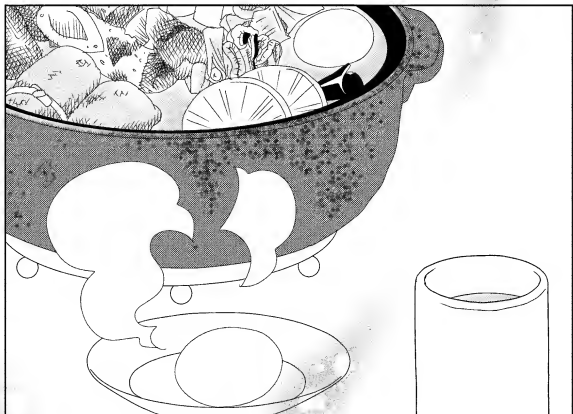




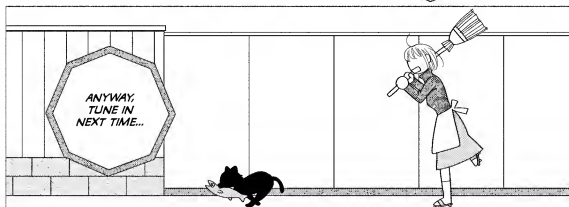
*I'M PROBABLY NOT THE ONLY ONE HAVING
TROUBLE LETTING MY GUARD DOWN...*

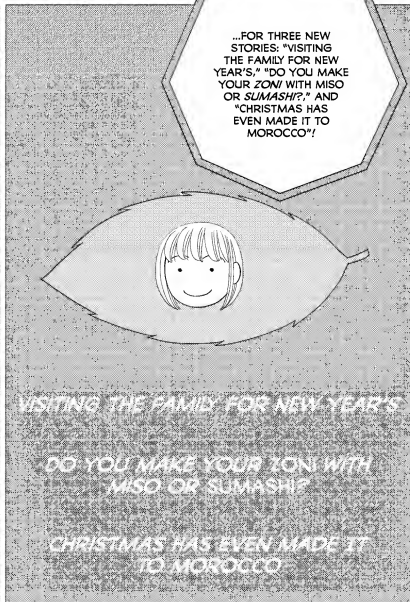


*...BUT I GUESS THAT FOR ALL THE HASSLES
OF LIVING WITH ANOTHER PERSON, THERE
ARE SOME NICE THINGS ABOUT IT, TOO.*

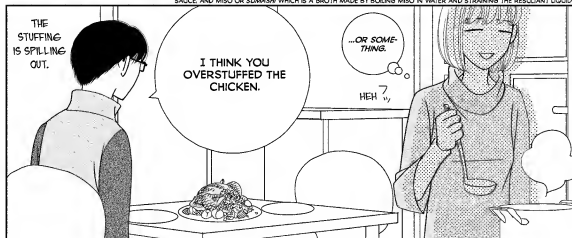


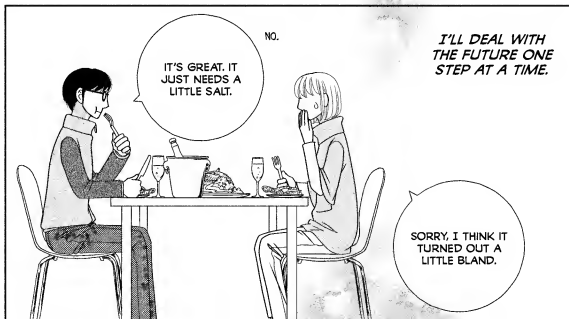
*I FEEL LIKE I FORGOT THAT
A LONG, LONG TIME AGO.*





ZONI IS A SOUP TRADITIONALLY SERVED DURING NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATIONS. IT CONTAINS MOCHI RICE CAKES AS WELL AS DASHI, SOY SAUCE, AND MISO OR SUMASHI WHICH IS A BROTH MADE BY BOILING MISO IN WATER AND STRAINING THE RESULTANT LIQUID.





NO.

IT'S GREAT. IT
JUST NEEDS A
LITTLE SALT.

*I'LL DEAL WITH
THE FUTURE ONE
STEP AT A TIME.*

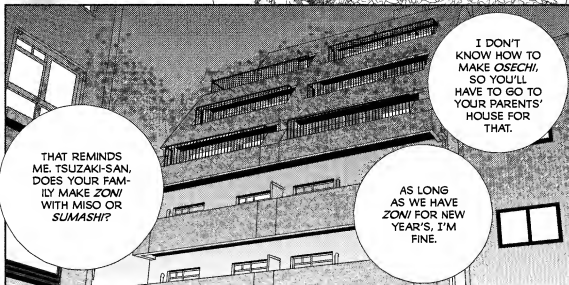
SORRY, I THINK IT
TURNED OUT A
LITTLE BLAND.

I WON'T
ASK.

DID YOU
MANAGE TO
MAKE THAT
CAKE?

WELL, I DID
MAKE IT, BUT
WHETHER I
MADE IT WELL
IS ANOTHER
STORY.

*FOR NOW, I'LL
FOCUS ON
MAKING MY
WORKPLACE
AS PLEASANT
AS POSSIBLE.*



THAT REMINDS
ME, TSUZAKI-SAN,
DOES YOUR FAMI-
LY MAKE ZONI
WITH MISO OR
SUMASHI?

I DON'T
KNOW HOW TO
MAKE OSECHI,
SO YOU'LL
HAVE TO GO TO
YOUR PARENTS'
HOUSE FOR
THAT.

AS LONG
AS WE HAVE
ZONI FOR NEW
YEAR'S, I'M
FINE.

REFERS COLLECTIVELY TO THE FOOD TRADITIONALLY EATEN AT JAPANESE NEW YEAR'S CELEBRATIONS. WHAT OSECHI CONSISTS OF VARIES BY REGION, BUT IT IS TYPICALLY AN APPETIZER, SOMETHING BOILED, SOMETHING MADE WITH VINEGAR, AND SOMETHING GRILLED OR FRIED.





OH YEAH...

*...I GUESS I
SHOULD HAVE SEEN
THIS COMING.*

WE ARE A
"COUPLE,"
AFTER ALL.



THE FULL-TIME
WIFE ESCAPIST

3

Like Bamboo Sprouting
After a Storm

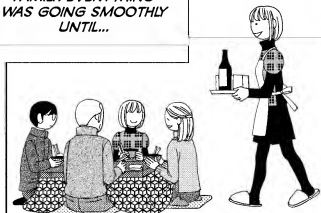




MIKURI HERE! I WAS HAVING TROUBLE FINDING A JOB, BUT TSUZAKI-SAN, WHO USED TO WORK WITH MY FATHER, HIRED ME AS HIS WIFE.

I'M STILL PRETTY NEW TO THIS! TEEHEE!

I'M GETTING PAID OVERTIME FOR STUFF LIKE BRINGING HIS PARENTS PRESENTS, HELPING WITH THE KITCHEN, AND WATCHING KOHAKU WITH THE FAMILY. EVERYTHING WAS GOING SMOOTHLY UNTIL...

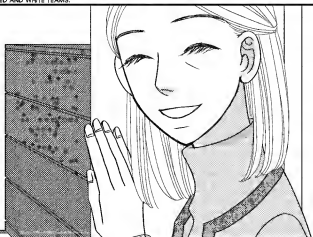


TODAY, WE'RE WORKING OUTSIDE THE OFFICE. MY ASSIGNMENT IS TO BE THE BRIDE STAYING WITH HER HUSBAND'S FAMILY DURING NEW YEAR'S FOR THE FIRST TIME!

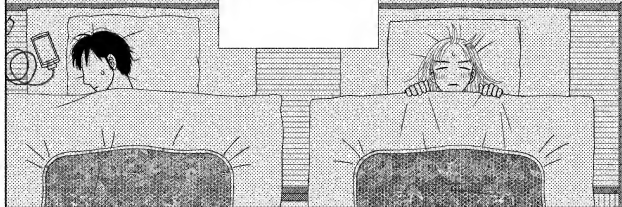


MIKURI IS REFERRING TO THE NHK PROGRAM KOHAKU UTA (GASSEN, OR RED AND WHITE SONG BATTLE). THIS PROGRAM BROADCAST EVERY NEW YEAR'S EVE, PUTS POPULAR MUSIC ARTISTS AGAINST EACH OTHER ON RED AND WHITE TEAMS.

YOU TWO CAN HAVE THIS ROOM TONIGHT.



...IT TURNED OUT
THAT WE WOULD
BE SLEEPING IN
THE SAME ROOM!

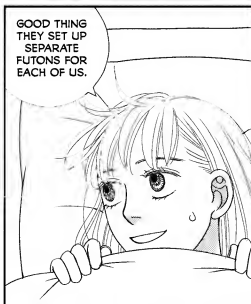


IT'S NOT
SURPRISING.

WELL, I
KNOW THAT.



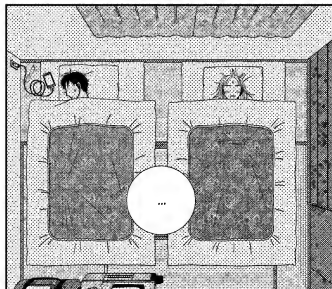
GOOD THING
THEY SET UP
SEPARATE
FUTONS FOR
EACH OF US.



COME TO THINK
OF IT, I ONCE RODE
ON A FERRY AND
SLEPT IN A BIG ROOM
WITH A BUNCH OF
OTHER PEOPLE. EVERY-
ONE HAD TO SHARE
THAT ROOM, YOUNG
OR OLD, MALE OR
FEMALE.

I GUESS THIS
IS A SORT OF RE-
HEARSAL FOR OUR
HONEYMOON-OR
RATHER-OUR BUSI-
NESS TRIP.





I'VE NEVER
BEEN ON A
FERRY.

OH YEAH?
HUH.



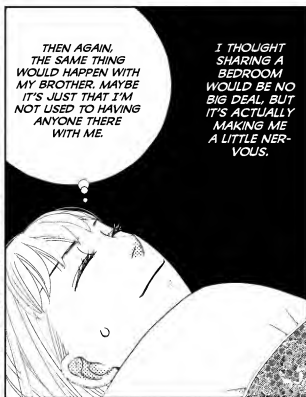
YEAH, THAT'S
TOTALLY DIFFERENT.

I SLEPT IN A
ROOM WITH A
BUNCH OF OTHER
BOYS ON A SCHOOL
FIELD TRIP ONCE, BUT
THAT'S NOT REALLY
THE SAME THING.



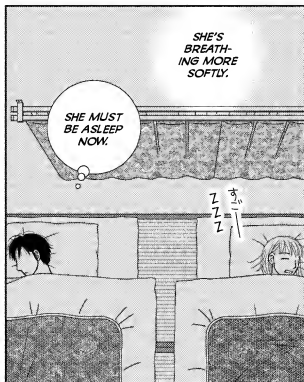
OH YEAH, I'D
LIKE TO CATCH A
GLIMPSE OF TSU-
ZAKI-SAN WITHOUT
HIS GLASSES
ON, TOO. I'VE
NEVER SEEN THAT
BEFORE...

I'LL HAVE TO
GET UP EARLY
AND CHANGE
CLOTHES BEFORE
TSUZAKI-SAN
WAKES UP.

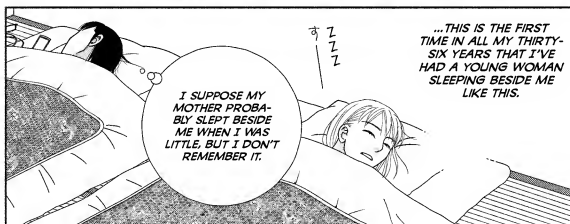
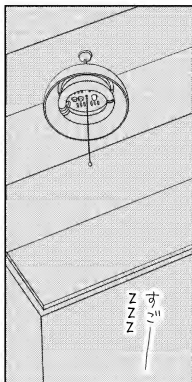


THEN AGAIN,
THE SAME THING
WOULD HAPPEN WITH
MY BROTHER. MAYBE
IT'S JUST THAT I'M
NOT USED TO HAVING
ANYONE THERE
WITH ME.

I THOUGHT
SHARING A
BEDROOM
WOULD BE NO
BIG DEAL, BUT
IT'S ACTUALLY
MAKING ME
A LITTLE NER-
VOUS.



THERE WE GO.

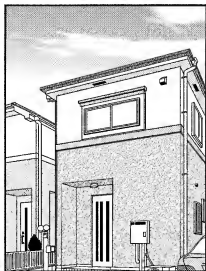


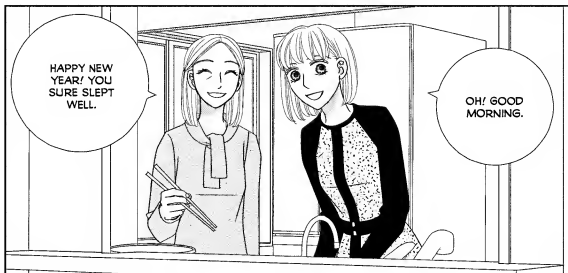


I WONDER IF SHE'S EVER SLEPT WITH A YOUNG MAN BESIDE HER.



I DON'T MEAN IN A BIG ROOM ON A FERRY, EITHER.





HAPPY NEW
YEAR! YOU
SURE SLEPT
WELL.

OH! GOOD
MORNING.



I'LL TAKE CARE
OF THE KITCHEN,
DEAR. YOU GO
HAVE SOME
OSECHI.

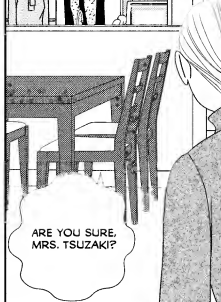
YEAH, COME
JOIN US, MIKU-
RI-CHAN!



HIRAMASA,
HOW MANY
RICE CAKES
DO YOU
WANT IN
YOUR ZONI?

ARE YOU
SURE? WHY
DON'T I GIVE
YOU TWO?

HMM.
JUST
ONE.



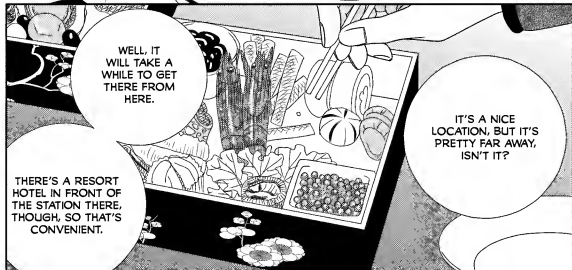
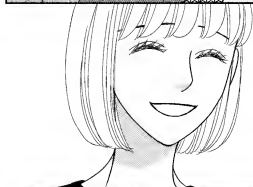
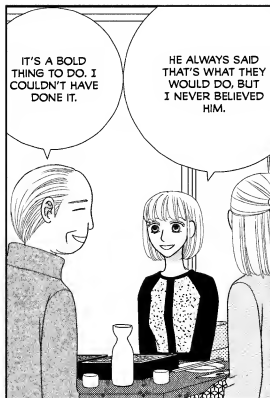
ARE YOU SURE,
MRS. TSUZAKI?

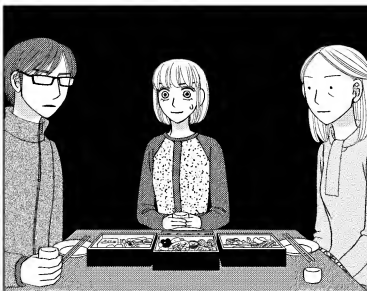
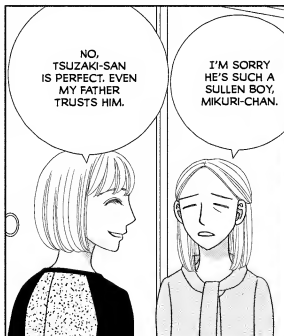


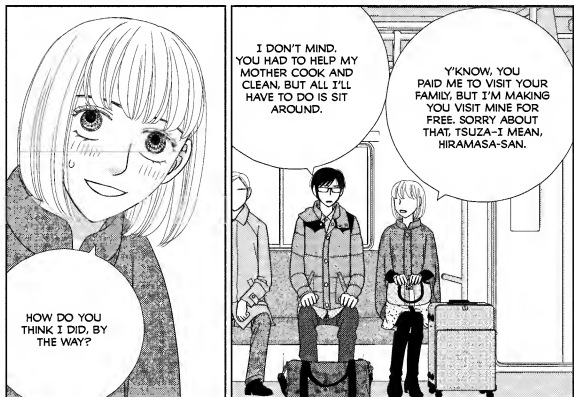
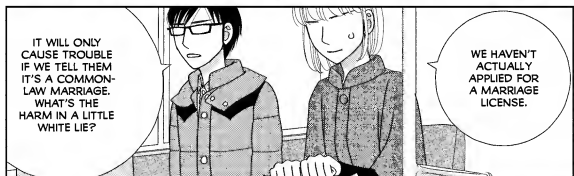
I'LL HAVE ZONI
AGAIN LATER.
FOR NOW, I'M
GOING TO DRINK
AND HAVE SOME
OSECHI.

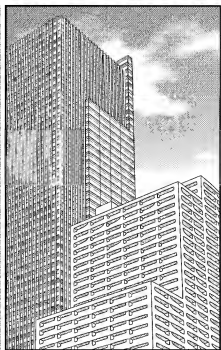
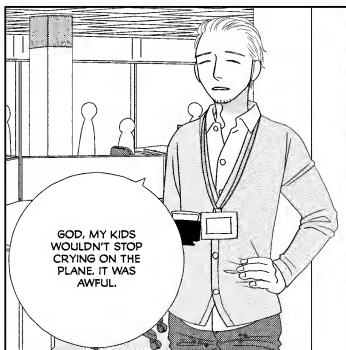
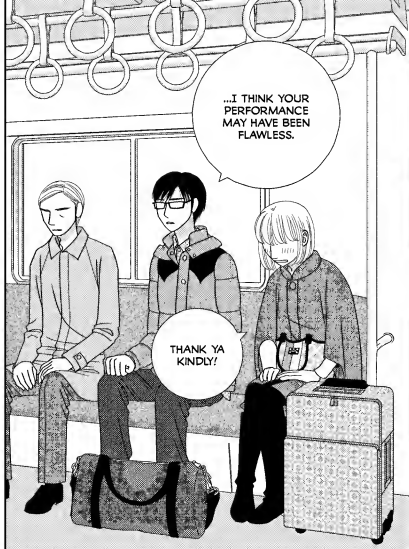
GREAT!
WHY DON'T WE
START WITH
SOME SAKE?

WOULD
YOU LIKE
ME TO HEAT
IT UP FOR
YOU?

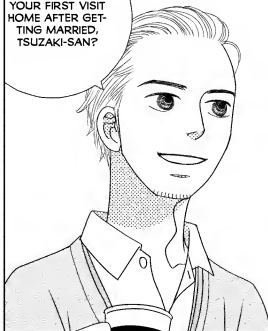








SO HOW WAS
YOUR FIRST VISIT
HOME AFTER GET-
TING MARRIED,
TSUZAKI-SAN?



YEAH, BUT
AT LEAST THE OLD
COUPLE NEXT TO US
WERE NICE ABOUT IT.
THEY WERE LIKE, "OH/
WHAT CUTE AND
LIVELY CHILDREN
YOU HAVE!"

YOU CAN'T
JUST CHANGE
CARS LIKE ON
A TRAIN, HUH?



THAT'S
A PRETTY BUSI-
NESSLIKE WAY
OF PUTTING IT.

WAS IT JUST
WORK TO
YOU?

IT WENT OFF
WITHOUT A
HITCH.



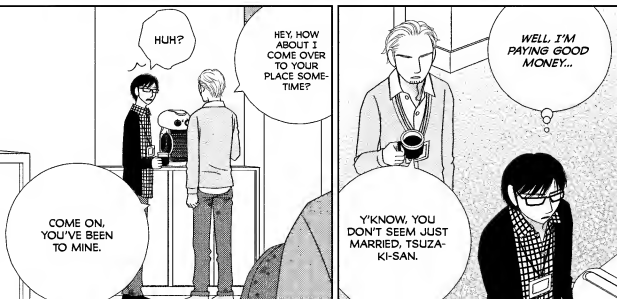
HUH?

HEY, HOW
ABOUT I
COME OVER
TO YOUR
PLACE SOME-
TIME?

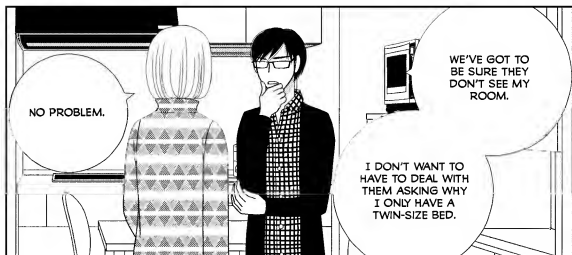
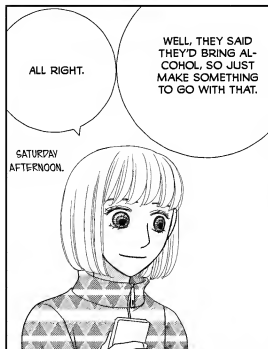
COME ON,
YOU'VE BEEN
TO MINE.

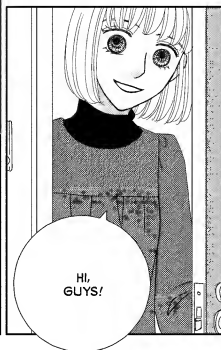
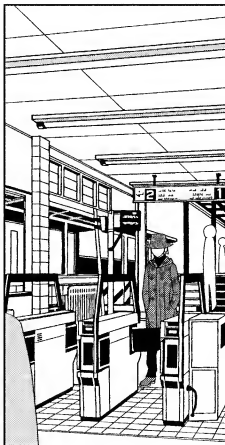
WELL, I'M
PAYING GOOD
MONEY...

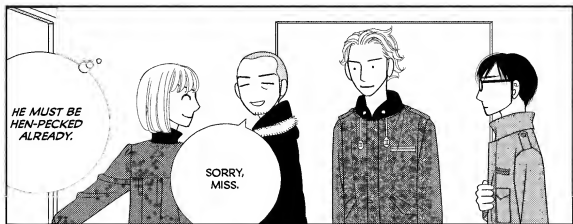
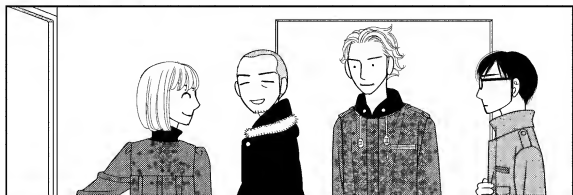
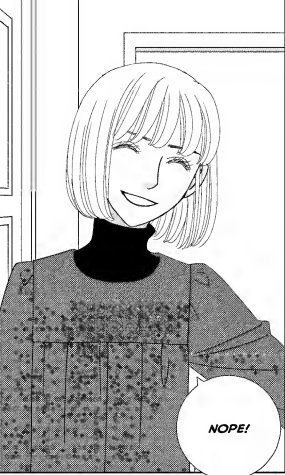
Y'KNOW, YOU
DON'T SEEM JUST
MARRIED, TSUZA-
KI-SAN.

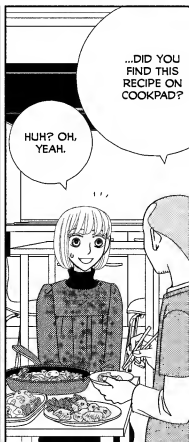
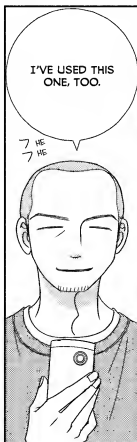


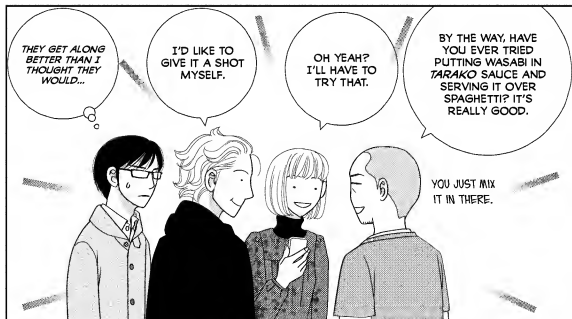




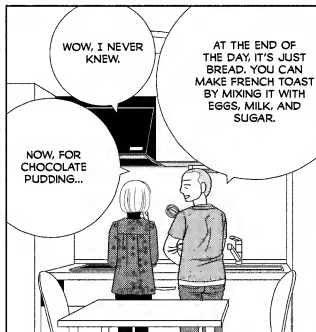


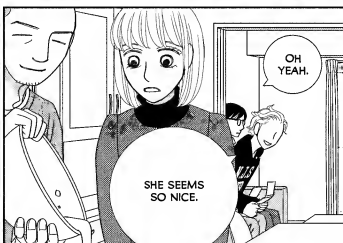


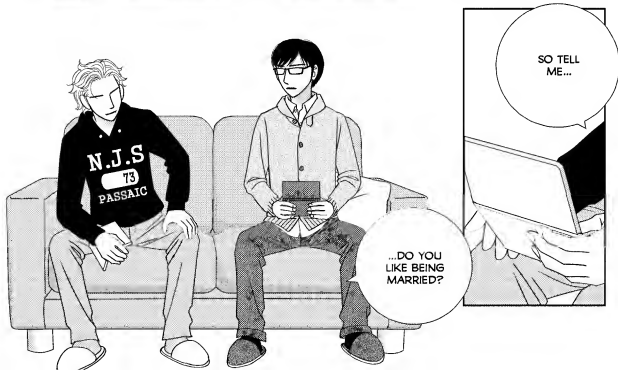
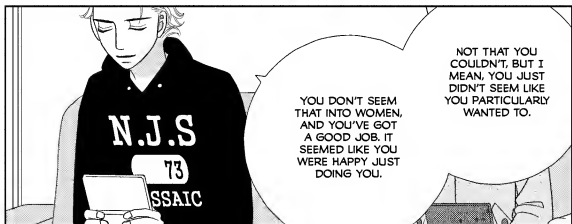




TARAKO REFERS TO THE ROE OF THE ALASKA POLLOCK, A TYPE OF COD. TARAKO SAUCE IS MADE USING THIS ROE, AS WELL AS SALT, PEPPER, BUTTER, AND LEMON JUICE, AND IT IS COMMONLY EATEN ON SPAGHETTI IN JAPAN.



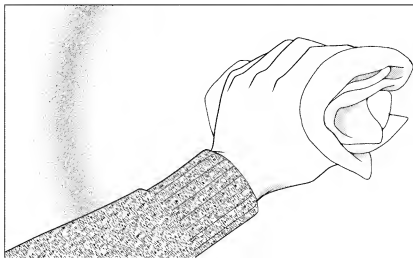




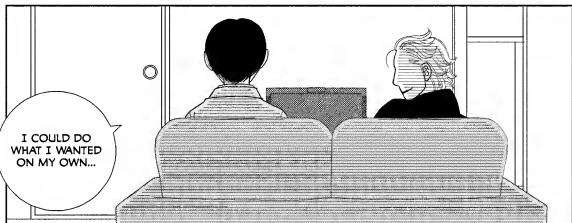
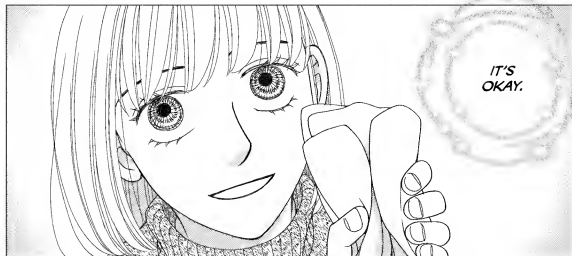


THAT INCIDENT WITH NUMATA-SAN...

...WAS JUST ONE REASON.



*THE REAL
REASON
WAS...*





...BUT I GOT
TO THINK-
ING...

...THAT ONLY ANOTHER
PERSON CAN GIVE
YOU REAL PEACE OF
MIND.



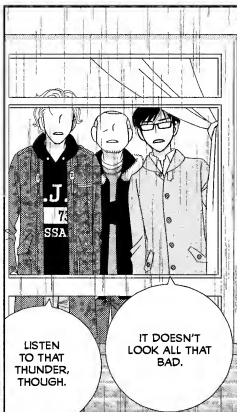
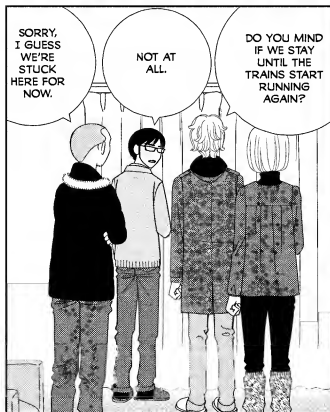
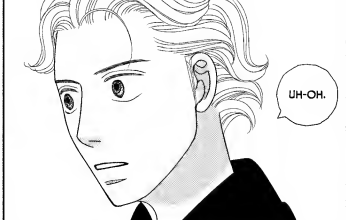
I'LL TRY THAT
RAMEN RECIPE WITH
THE GROUND BEEF,
GARLIC CHIVES, AND
SPROUTS.

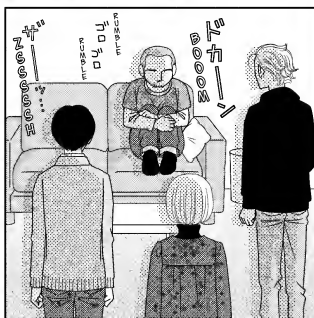
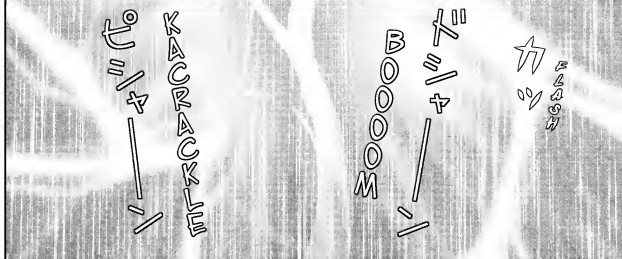
THE CHOCOLATE
PUDDING WAS
DELICIOUS!

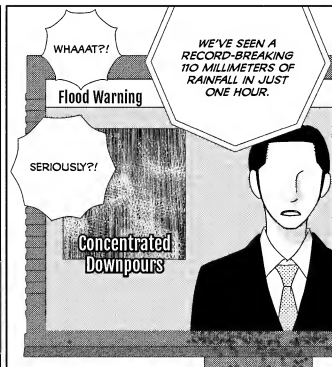
FOR THE
SPROUTS, I
RECOMMEND
USING THICK
ONES.

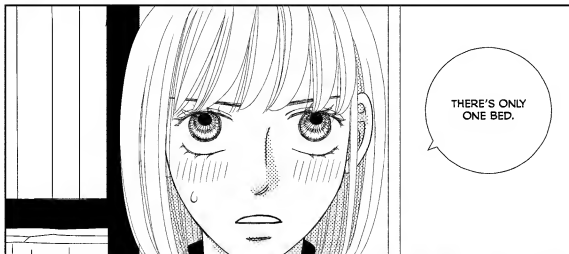


WELL, I GUESS
WE SHOULD BE
GETTING OUT OF
YOUR HAIR.



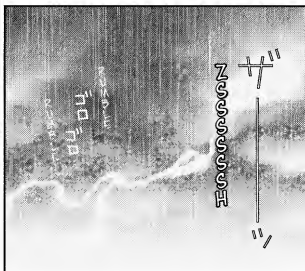
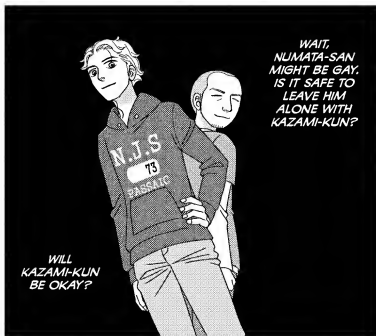


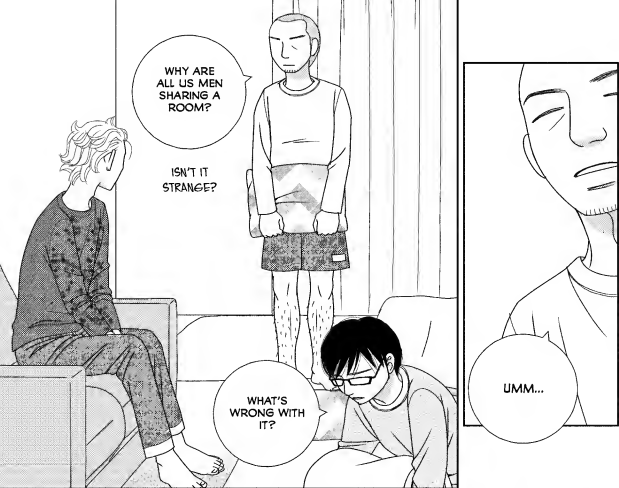


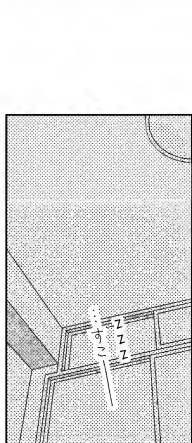


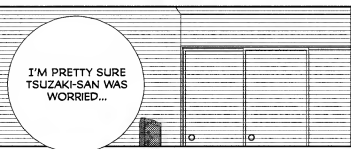
ARE WE
GOING TO
HAVE TO
SHARE A
BED?













THIS IS THE BED HIRAMASA-SAN USUALLY SLEEPS IN.





*WHAT'S THE
MATTER?*

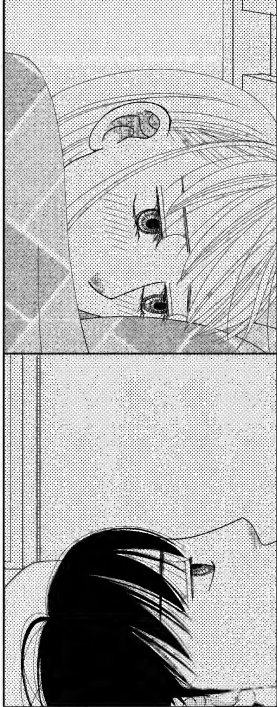
*THE SHEETS ARE
CLEAN, BUT FOR
SOME REASON,
I STILL FEEL
EMBARRASSED.*

*IT'S MAKING IT
HARD TO SLEEP.*

I'M SLEEPING ALONE...

...BUT IN A WAY...

...IT FEELS LIKE I'M SLEEPING WITH HIM.



THIS IS WEIRD.



*The Full Time
Wife Escapist*
—
Tsunami Umino



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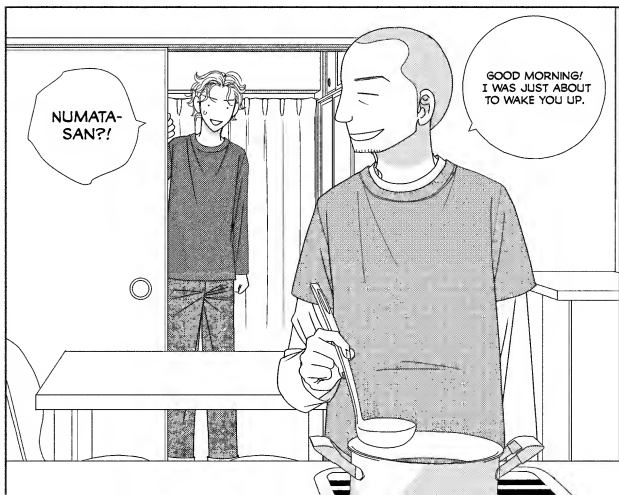
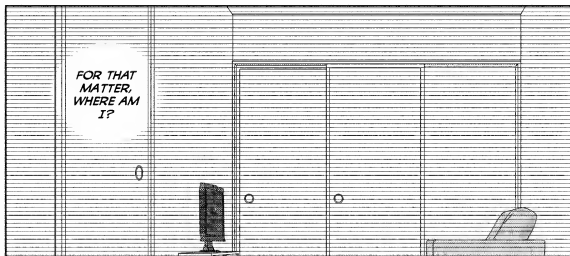
I CAN HEAR SOMEONE CHOPPING VEGETABLES.

*I CAN SMELL
MISO SOUP.*

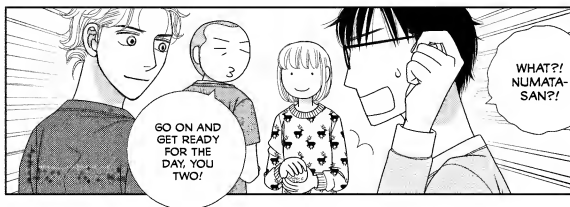
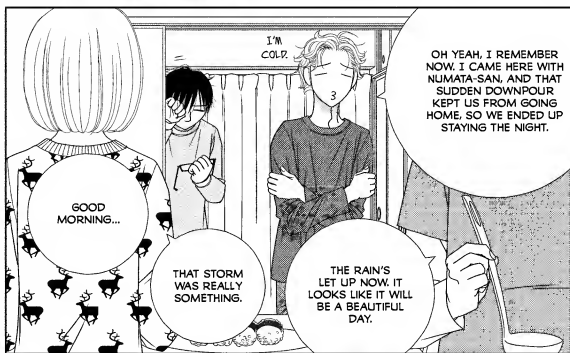
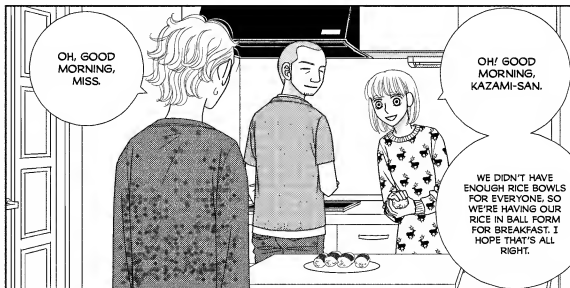
*THAT'S THE
SMELL OF
MORNING.*

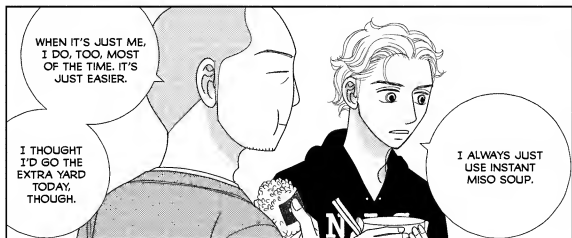
NGH...

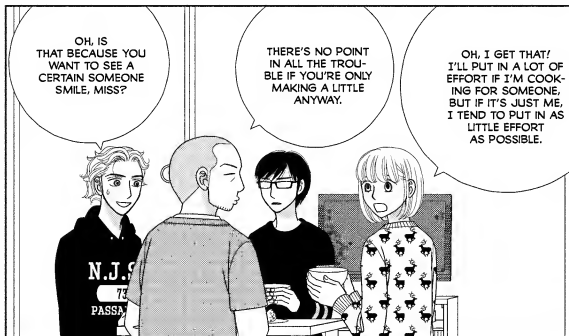
*WAIT, WHAT
IS TSUZAKI-SAN
DOING HERE?*



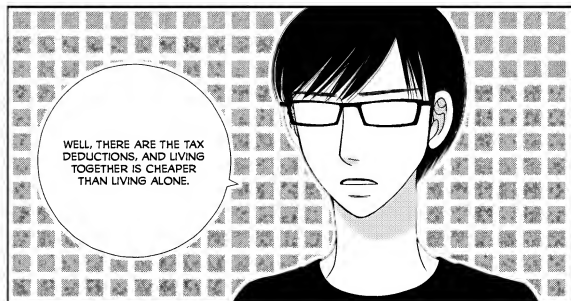
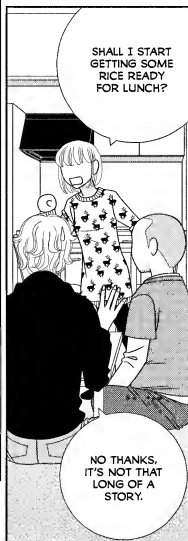


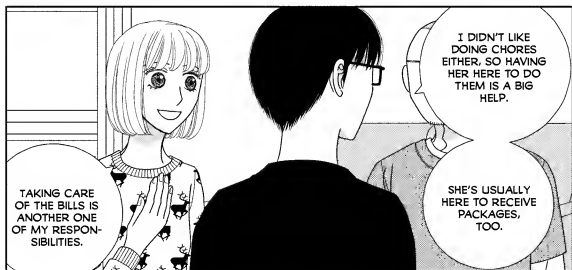
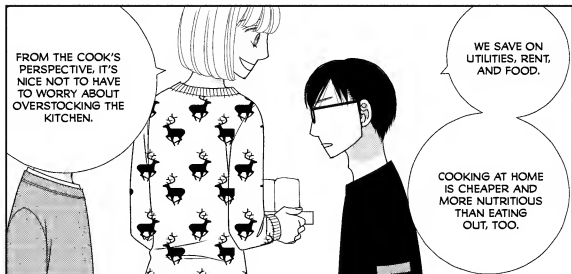














TRADITIONALLY IT IS THE WIFE WHO HANDLES MONEY IN JAPANESE HOUSEHOLDS, AND SHE GIVES AN ALLOWANCE TO HER HUSBAND AND CHILDREN.



BUT ISN'T IT A PAIN
TO HAVE SOMEONE
ALWAYS RELYING
ON YOU?



I EXPECT HER TO MAKE
A BUDGET AND STICK TO
IT. I CHECK OUR BOOKS
FREQUENTLY.

THE PRICE OF
VEGETABLES VARIES
WITH THE SEASONS,
THOUGH, SO I HAVE
TO ALTER IT FRE-
QUENTLY.

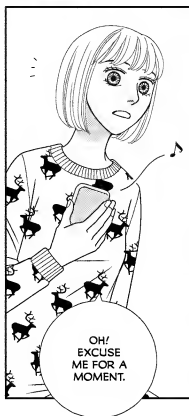
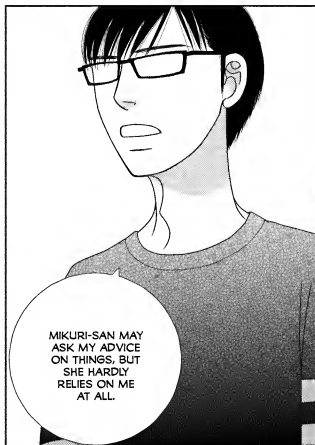


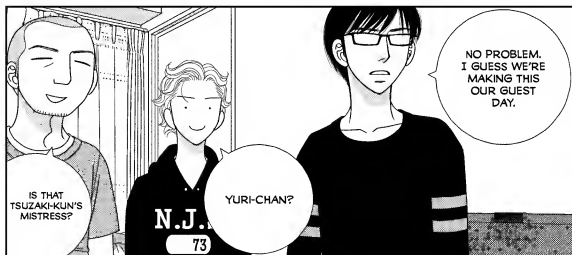
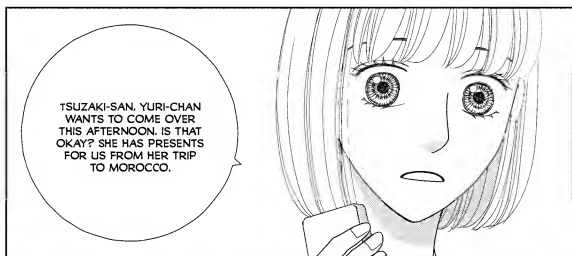
I'LL TRY TO DO BETTER
NEXT YEAR. IT WILL BE
EASIER ONCE I HAVE
THE DATA ON ALL OUR
MONTHLY EXPENDI-
TURES FROM THIS
YEAR.

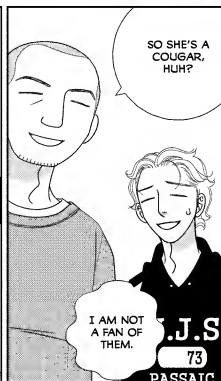
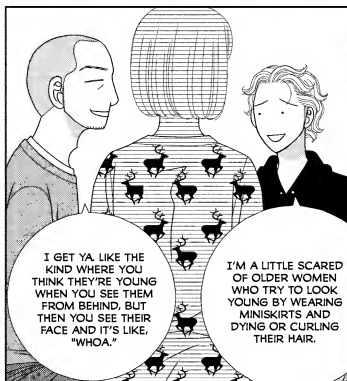
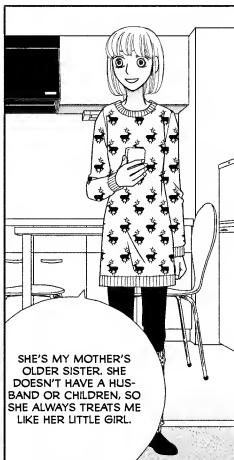
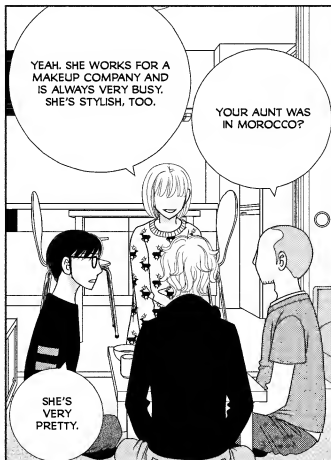
THANK YOU
FOR ALL YOUR
EFFORT.

NOT AT
ALL.

WHY DO YOU
TWO ALWAYS
TALK LIKE
YOU'RE DOING
BUSINESS?







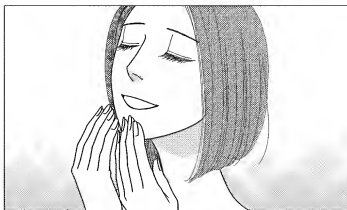


TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP

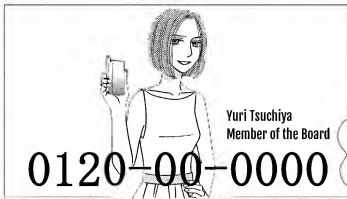


**YURI TSUCHIYA,
52 YEARS OLD.**

**THE SECRET TO HER
GREAT SKIN? COLLAGEN
PEPTIDES.**



**I WANT TO BE
BEAUTIFUL NO
MATTER HOW
OLD I GET.**

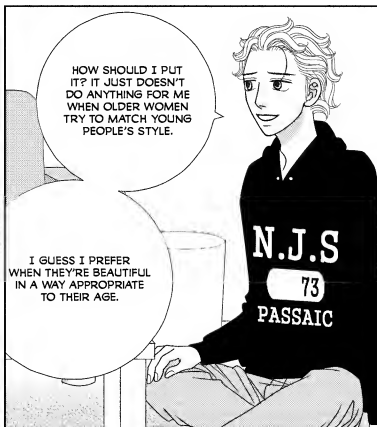
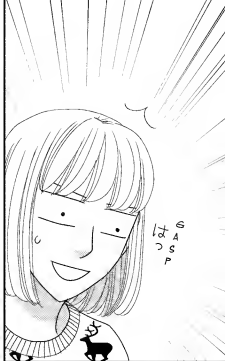
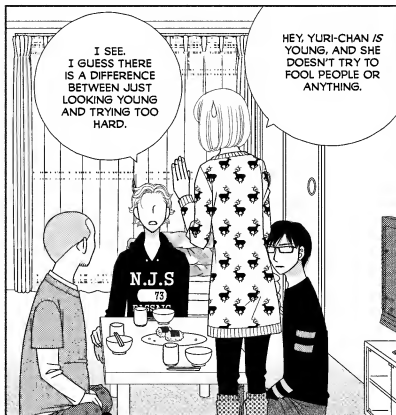


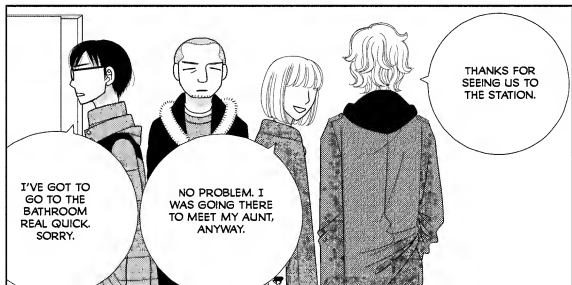
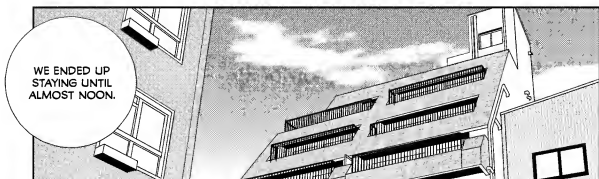
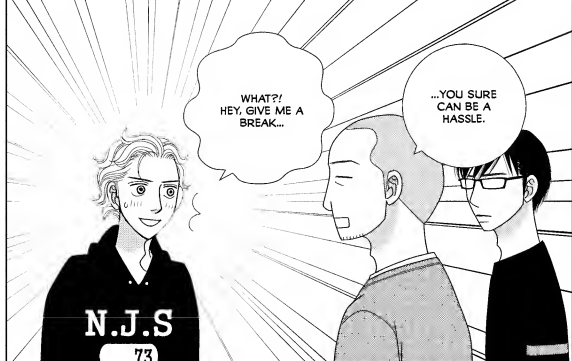
**Yuri Tsuchiya
Member of the Board**

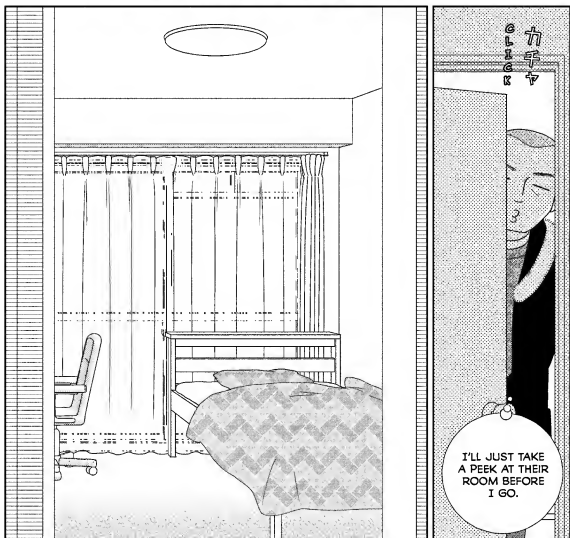
0120-00-0000

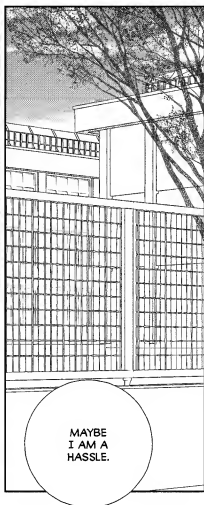
**THE FIRST STEP IS TO
DIAL 0120-00-0000.**

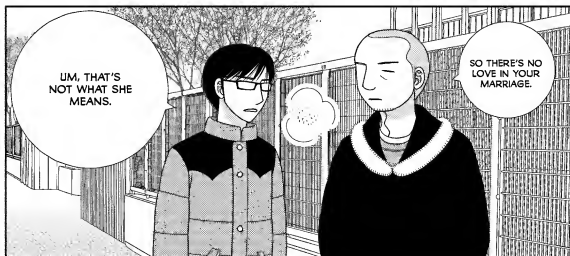
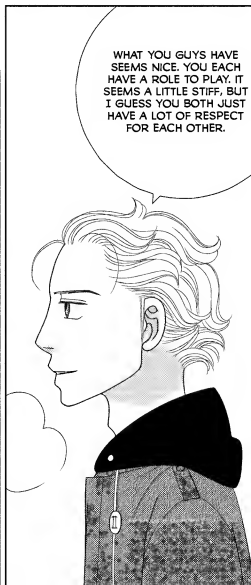
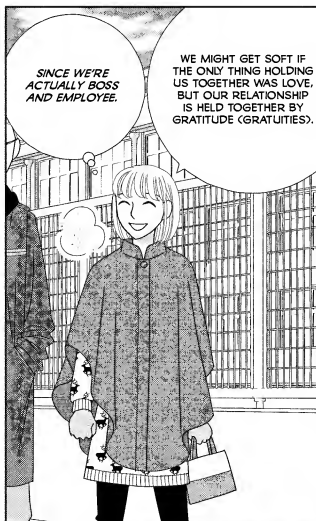
**GET STARTED
TODAY!**

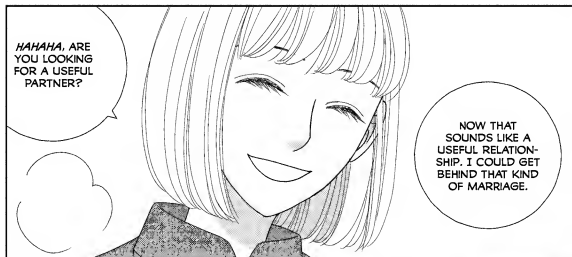




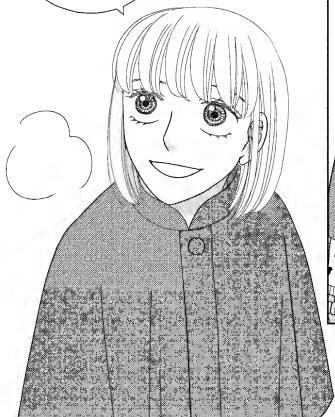






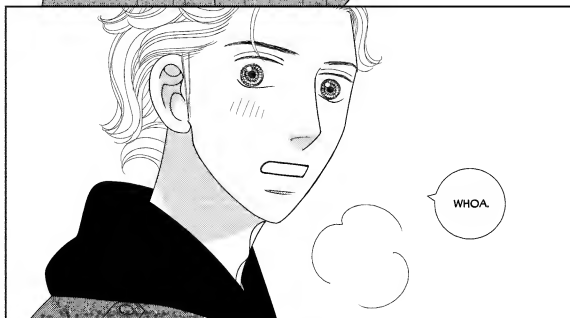
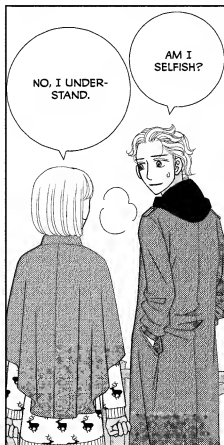


IT JUST SEEMS
TO ME LIKE YOU
VALUE YOUR OWN
FEELINGS AS MUCH
AS THOSE OF OTHER
PEOPLE.

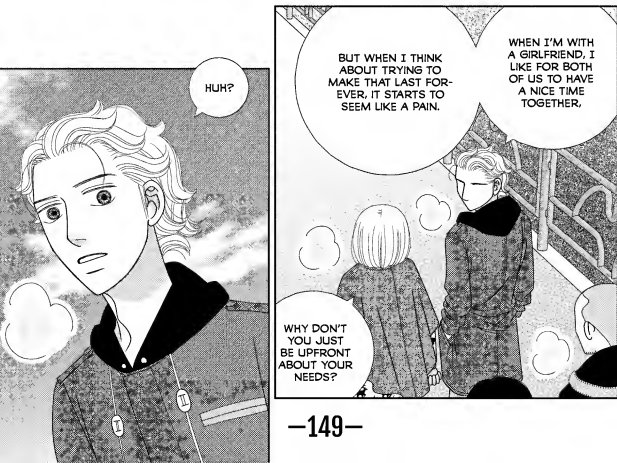


NO, I UNDER-
STAND.

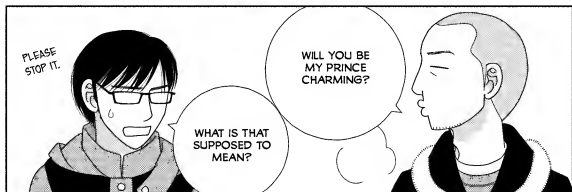
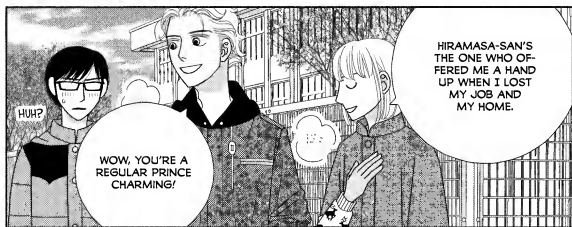
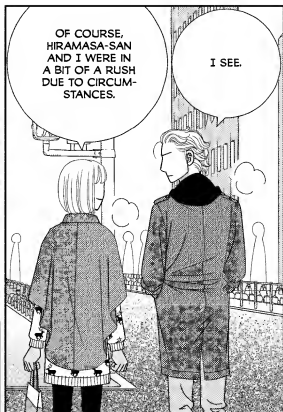
AM I
SELFISH?

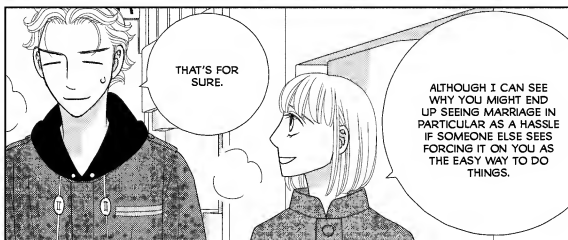
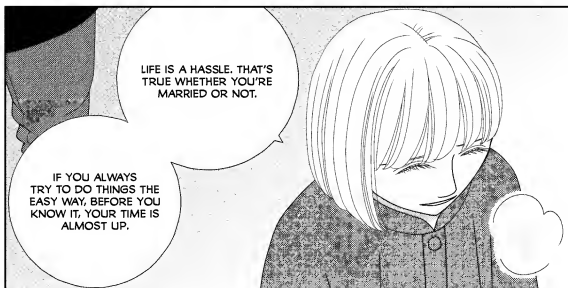
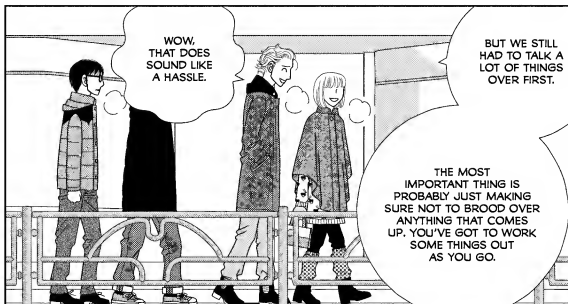


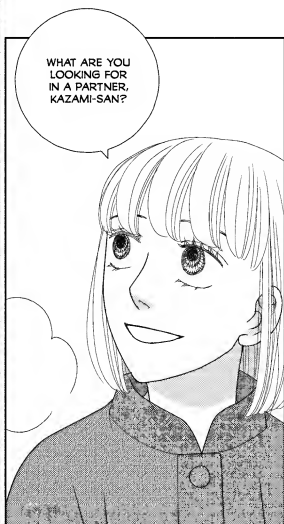
WHOA.

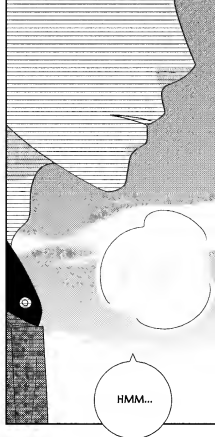
















SEE YA.



I GUESS YOUR
AUNT DOES LOOK
HER AGE.



WOW,
YOU'VE
GOT GOOD
HEARING.

WAS THAT
GUY CALLING
ME OLD?!

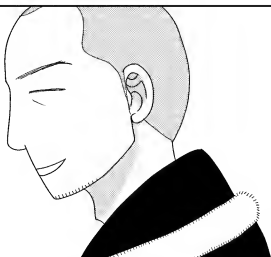


UMM,
SORRY...

THAT'S NOT
WHAT HE
MEANT.

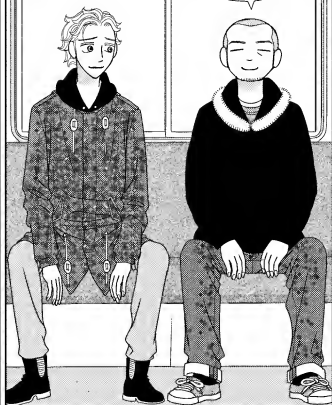
WELL, I NEVER! I
FEEL LIKE I'VE SEEN
HIM SOMEWHERE
BEFORE, TOO.

TSUZAKI-KUN
IS JUST TOO
CUTE.

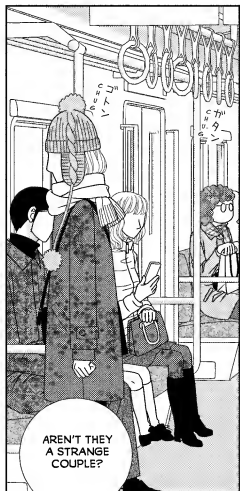


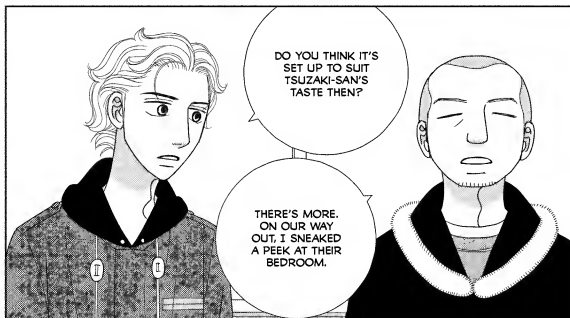
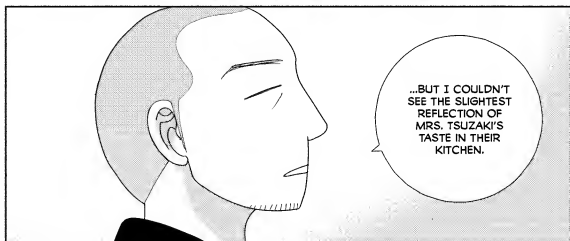
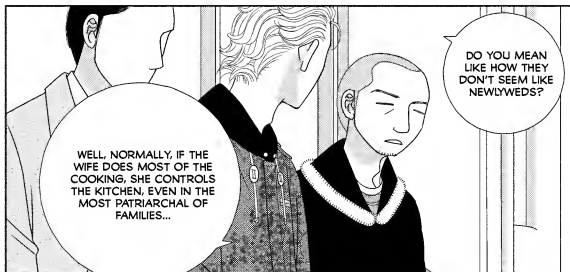
HEARING YOU
SAY THAT SORT
OF MAKES ME
FEEL LIKE I'VE
BEEN DUMPED.

I LIKED YOU FOR YOUR
LOOKS, KAZAMI-KUN,
BUT I JUST LOVE HOW
SERIOUSLY TSUZAKI-KUN
TAKES EVERYTHING.

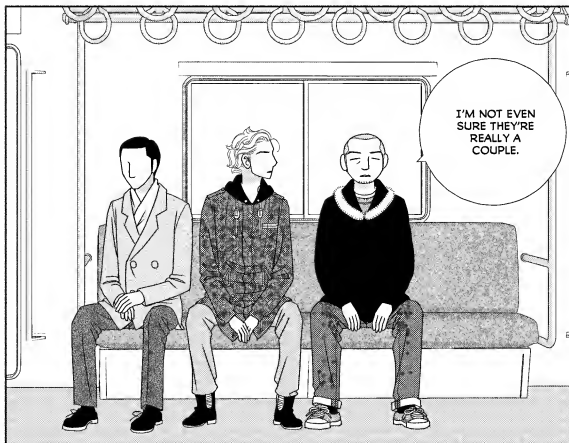


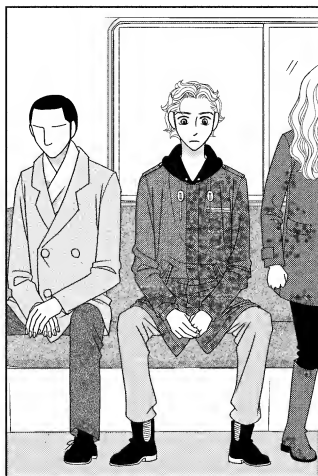
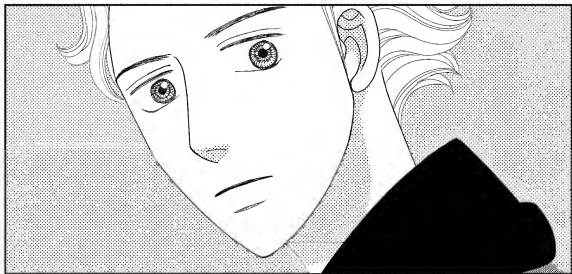
AREN'T THEY
A STRANGE
COUPLE?

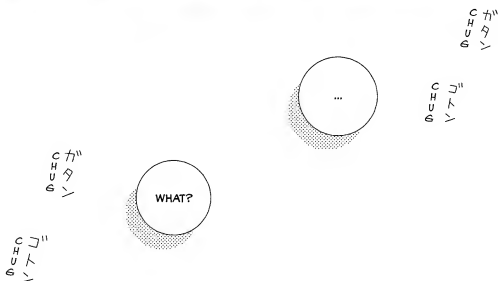
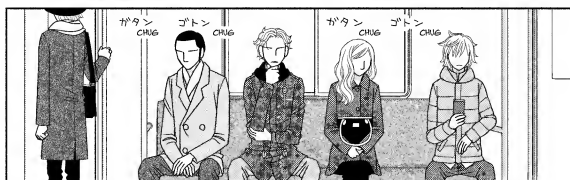












Special Thanks to

**Mio Hase,
my family and friends,
Kamakura-san,
Murakami-san,
Komuro-san,
everyone who cooperated with my interviews,

and YOU.**

With Love, Tsunami Umino, 2013

**You can follow my work at this blog!
<http://uminotsunami.seesaa.net/>**

Afterword

This is my thirty-seventh tankobon.

This is my first serial comic in a modern setting since *Katten Ginka*. I guess you could say *Kumaemon's* setting was modern, too, but that's not quite what I mean.

I'm working on this one a little differently than I have on my previous serial works, so I don't quite know how it will turn out. *Daisy & Luck* was similar, but it got canceled as soon as it became a regular feature in the magazine it was being published in. I'm still a little nervous as to whether something like that will happen this time. Anyway, I already have an idea of where this story is going and how it's going to end, so I hope I'll be able to take my time with it.

Mikuri and her brother Chigaya are named after plants. Mikuri's name refers to the branched bur-reed, and Chigaya's refers to a type of grass (*Imperata cylindrical*). In fact, everyone in Mikuri's family is named after a plant. I didn't give much thought to Mikuri's father's name. I was getting close to my deadline for the first chapter, and when I realized I needed to put a name for Mikuri's head of household on the form on the last page, I had no idea what to do.

In the end, I couldn't come up with anything but the name of a character from a TV show I was into at the time (*Tochihiro Ishimoto* from *Akai Ito no Onna*), so I just figured whatever and went with *Tochio Moriyama*. His name refers to the tree *Aesculus turbinata*.

By the way, *Tsuzaki's* name is water-themed. *Hiramasu* refers to a kind of fish called the yellowtail amberjack. *Kazami's* name is wind-themed, as it is written with the character for wind. Characters like *Numata* (written with the characters for swamp and paddy) and *Hino* (written sun and field) have nature-themed names.

I hope you enjoy these names as much as the proverb-based chapter titles.

Oh, and did you know that "*Running Away is Embarrassing, but Useful*" is a Hungarian proverb? I've got all sorts of proverbs written down in my notebook, like "Where a cat looks there is surely a ghost." Then again, does that one really count as a proverb?

As of the time of this writing, my apartment is undergoing renovation, so I'm renting a different apartment on a weekly basis for now.

This place is really old and small, and when my assistant and I are using our computers at the same time, it's hard to connect to the internet. It's pretty stressful.

God, I just want to go back to my old place already. It's hard to get any work done here. I'm looking forward to seeing my new apartment though, as they're changing the way the rooms are set up as part of the renovation.

In other news, I've been wanting to go to Paris and Chiang Mai this year, and I already have plans to go to Paris with a friend of mine who also draws manga. It'll be my first time. The closest I've ever been to France was when I visited Switzerland and went up Mont Blanc. It's pretty amazing how fast you can get to the top of a mountain taller than Mt. Fuji riding a cable car.

As far as work goes, I'd like to publish a one-off in *Morning* magazine again this year. I'll write the dialogue for it on my flights to and from Paris, since I won't have time otherwise.

Last year, I got to do a full-color one-off for *Morning*. It was the first time I was published in that magazine. I'd say it was one of the top ten best experiences of my life. My debut was in *Nakayoshi*, and I've been publishing in various magazines ever since. I haven't written anything that I've become particularly well known for, but I think there's value in just keeping at it.

Publishing in *Morning* definitely got me some new readers.

It's weird to think that by next year it will have been twenty-five years since I started getting published in my teens. The time sure flies. I guess I've been working hard. I'm grateful to all my readers, but there's a special place in my heart for those who have been following my work all these years.

A lot's going to happen in volume two, so keep an eye out for it! I'm glad to hear there are a lot of guys, too, who like *Running Away Is Embarrassing, But Useful*.

I'll keep doing my best!

Well anyway, see you later.

In the next volume...



*Volume 2
Coming
Sooooon!!*

IS KAZAMI GOING TO GET INVOLVED IN
HIRAMASA AND MIKURI'S MARRIAGE IN A WAY
NO ONE EXPECTED?! ARE THESE TWO IN FOR
SMOOTH SAILING, OR ROUGH WATERS?

THE FULL-TIME Wife ESCAPIST



Translation Notes

Running away is Embarrassing, but useful, page 164 [164.1]

This Hungarian proverb was the title of this manga in Japanese. You can see it in Hungarian on the filler pages: "Szégyen a futás, de hasznos."

Oh, and did you know that "Running Away is Embarrassing, but Useful" is a Hungarian proverb? one really count as a proverb?

The Autumn Sun Sets as Fast as a Bucket Falling into a Well, page 2

[2.1]

This is a Japanese saying about how short the day is in autumn.

Chapter 1

The Autumn Sun Sets as Fast as a Bucket Falling into a Well

Taro Hakase, page 20

[20.2]

This man is a famous Japanese composer and violinist.



Traditional Japanese house, page 25

[25.3]

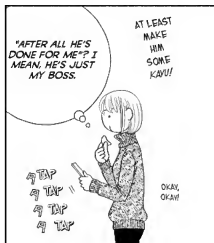
In the original, she uses the term *kominka*. *Kominka* refers to various kinds of houses built in Japan prior to the Taisho era, which began in 1926. These houses were typically built with traditional Japanese architecture, which uses few or no nails.



Kayu, page 30

[30.1]

This is a porridge made by cooking rice in a larger amount of water than usual. In English, it is sometimes called congee.



Ojiya, page 35

[35.3]

This dish is similar to *kayu*, but it typically includes a greater variety of ingredients, such as vegetables, soy sauce, miso, and meat.



Dashi, page 35

[35.4]

This is a fish stock used often in Japanese cooking.



Mentsuyu, page 36

[36.1]

Mentsuyu is a Japanese sauce made out of *dashi*, soy sauce, *mirin* (a rice-based cooking alcohol), and sugar. It can be used as an ingredient in various dishes as well as for dipping.



Family registry, page 48

[48.4]

This is the main system by which records are kept on Japanese citizens. In terms of its importance and use in everyday life, one can think of it as being akin to a combination of a birth certificate and a social security number. As the name suggests, it is organized by family and not by individual. Typically, things such as birth, death, marriage, and divorce are recorded here.



Translation Notes

A Fox's Wedding, page 51 [51.1]

This chapter title refers to a supernatural phenomenon known in Japan that is similar to a will-o'-the-wisp. These lights seen at night were once thought to be the lanterns of guests at a fox's wedding procession. The fox is known as a supernatural trickster in Japanese folklore.

Bubble economy, page 68 [68.1]

The term "bubble economy" often refers to the period in Japan between 1986 and 1991 when real estate and stock prices were driven extremely high by speculation, only to come crashing down. This marked the end of the high economic growth Japan experienced after World War II. The Japanese economy has struggled with stagnation ever since.

Chapter 2 A Fox's Wedding



Oden, page 78 [78.3]

Oden is a dashi-based stew that can include ingredients such as fish, potatoes, radish, and hard-boiled eggs.



Chicken for Christmas, page 79 [79.2]

Whereas Christmas is typically thought of as a family holiday in America and Europe, it is more of a couple's holiday in Japan. It is common to eat chicken on Christmas there, thanks to an advertising campaign for Kentucky Fried Chicken from the seventies.



Zoni, page 85

[85.1]

Zoni is a soup traditionally served during New Year's celebrations. It contains mochi rice cakes as well as dashi, soy sauce, and miso or sumashi.

Sumashi, page 85

[85.1]

Sumashi is a broth made by boiling miso in water and straining the resultant liquid.



Osechi, page 86

[86.3]

Osechi refers collectively to the food traditionally eaten at Japanese New Year's celebrations. What osechi consists of varies by region, but it is typically an appetizer, something boiled, something made with vinegar, and something grilled or fried.



Like Bamboo Sprouting After a Storm, page 90

[90.1]

In Japanese, this is an idiom for something that suddenly appears in great quantity.

Chapter 3

Like Bamboo Sprouting After a Storm

Kohaku, page 91

[91.3]

Mikuri is referring to the NHK program *Kohaku Uta Gassen*, or Red and White Song Battle in English. This program is broadcast every year on the night of New Year's Eve in Japan. The producers invite popular music artists to appear on the program, and they divide them into red and white teams to compete with each other. The red team consists of female artists, and the white team consists of male ones.



Translation Notes

Tarako sauce, page 107

[107.1]

Tarako refers to the roe of the Alaska pollock, a type of cod. *Tarako* sauce is made using this roe, as well as salt, pepper, butter, and lemon juice, and it is commonly eaten on spaghetti in Japan.



Allowance, page 136

[136.3]

Traditionally, it is the wife who handles money in Japanese households, and she gives an allowance to her husband and children.



Tankobon, page 164

[164.1]

Most manga start out by being serialized in a magazine. When the chapters are collected into a book, that book is called a *tankobon*.

This is my thirty-seventh tankobon.

The Full-Time Wife Escapist 1

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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